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"It is my nature to..."



L O G I C K:  
OR, THE  
RIGHT USE of REASON  
IN THE  
INQUIRY AFTER TRUTH.

WITH  
A Variety of RULES to guard against  
ERROR in the Affairs of RELIGION  
and HUMAN LIFE, as well as in the  
SCIENCES.

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By *ISAAC WATTS*, D. D.

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A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED.

EDINBURGH:

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M DCC LXXXI.

LOGIC

OR THE

RIGHT USE OF REASON

IN THE

INQUIRY AFTER TRUTH

WITH

A VARIETY OF RULES & GUIDES  
FOR THE AFFAIRS OF RELIGION  
AND HUMAN LIFE, AS WELL AS IN THE  
SCIENCE OF LOGIC.

---

BY JAMES M. LESTER, M.D.

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A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED.

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LOGICK:

OR, THE

RIGHT USE

OF

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LOGIC

OR

RIGHT USE

OF

REASON

Sir JOHN HARTOPP, Baronet,

S. I R,

**I**T is fit the publick should receive through your hands what was written originally for the assistance of your younger studies, and was then presented to you.

It was by the repeated importunities of our learned friend Mr. *John Eames*, that I was persuaded to revise these *rudiments of logick*, and when I had once suffered myself to begin the work, I was drawn still onward far beyond my first design, even to the neglect, or too long delay of other pressing and important demands that were upon me.

It has been my endeavour to form every part of this treatise both for the instruction of students, to open their way into the sciences, and for the more extensive and general service of mankind, that the *gentleman* and the *Christian* might find their account in the perusal as well as the *scholar*. I have therefore collected and proposed the chief principles and rules of right judgment in matters of common and sacred importance, and pointed out our most frequent mistakes and prejudices in the concerns of life and religion, that we might better guard against the springs of error, guilt and sorrow, which surround us in our state of mortality.

You know, Sir, the great design of this noble science is to rescue our reasoning powers from their unhappy slavery and darkness; and thus, with all due submission and deference, it offers an humble assistance to divine revelation. Its chief business is to relieve the natural weaknesses of the mind by some better efforts of nature; it is to diffuse a light over the understanding in our inquiries after truth,

and not to furnish the tongue with debate and controversy. *True logick* is not that noisy thing that deals all in dispute and wrangling, to which former ages had debased and confined it; yet its disciples must acknowledge also, that they are taught to vindicate and defend the truth, as well as to search it out. *True logick* doth not require a long detail of hard words to amuse mankind, and to puff up the mind with empty sounds, and a pride of false learning; yet some distinctions and terms of art are necessary to range every idea in its proper class, and to keep our thoughts from confusion. The world is now grown so wise as not to suffer this valuable art to be engrossed by the schools. In so polite and knowing an age, every *man of reason* will covet some acquaintance with *logick*, since it renders its daily service to *wisdom* and *virtue*, and to the affairs of *common life*, as well as to the *sciences*.

I will not presume, *Sir*, that this little book is improved since its first composure in proportion to the improvements of your manly age. But when you shall please to review it in your retired hours, perhaps you may refresh your own memory in some of the early parts of *learning*: And if you find all the additional remarks and rules made so familiar to you already by your own observation, that there is nothing new among them, it will be no unpleasant reflection that you have so far anticipated the present zeal and labour of,

S I R,

*Your most Faithful, and*

*Obedient Servant,*

LONDON, Aug. 24,  
1724.

I. W A T T S.

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INTRO-

# INTRODUCTION

A N D

## GENERAL SCHEME.

**L**OGICK is *the art of using REASON \* well in our inquiries after truth, and the communication of it to others.*

REASON \* is the glory of human nature, and one of the chief eminencies whereby we are raised above our fellow-creatures the brutes in this lower world.

*Reason*, as to the power and principles of it, is the common gift of God to all men; though all are not favoured with it by nature in an equal degree: But the *acquired improvements* of it in different men, make a much greater distinction between them than nature had made. I could even venture to say, that the *improvement of reason* hath raised the learned and the prudent in the European world, almost as much above the *Hottentots*, and other savages of *Africa*, as those savages are by nature superior to the birds, the beasts, and the fishes.

Now the *design of logic* is to teach us the right use of our *reason*, or *intellectual powers*, and the improvement of them in ourselves and others; this is not only necessary in order to attain any competent knowledge in the *sciences*, or the affairs of learning, but to govern both the greater and the meaner *actions of life*. It is the cultivation of our *reason* by which we are better enabled to distinguish

\* The word *reason* in this place is not confined to the mere faculty of reasoning, or inferring one thing from another, but includes all the intellectual powers of man,

guish good from evil, as well as truth from falsehood: And both these are matters of the highest importance, whether we regard this life, or the life to come.

The *pursuit* and *acquisition* after truth is of infinite concernment to mankind. Hereby we become acquainted with the nature of things both in heaven and earth, and their various relations to each other. It is by this means we discover our duty to God and our fellow-creatures: By this we arrive at the knowledge of *natural religion*, and learn to confirm our faith in *divine revelation*, as well as to understand what is revealed. Our wisdom, prudence and piety, our present conduct, and our future hope, are all influenced by the use of our *rational powers* in the search after truth.

There are several things that make it very necessary that our reason should have some assistance in the exercise or use of it.

The first is, the *depth and difficulty* of many truths, and the *weakness* of our reason to see far into things at once, and penetrate to the bottom of them. It was a saying among the ancients, *Veritas in puteo*, "Truth lies in a well;" and, to carry on this metaphor, we may very justly say, that *logick* does, as it were, supply us with steps whereby we may go down to reach the water; or it frames the links of a chain, whereby we may draw the water up from the bottom. Thus, by the means of many reasonings well connected together, philosophers in our age have drawn a thousand truths out of the depths of darkness, which our fathers were utterly unacquainted with.

Another thing that makes it necessary for our reason to have some assistance given it, is the *disguise* and *false colours* in which many things appear to us in this present imperfect state: There are a thousand things which are not in reality what they appear to be, and that both in the *natural* and the *moral* world:

So

So the *sun* appears to be flat as a plate of silver, and to be less than twelve inches in diameter: The *moon* appears to be as big as the *sun*, and the rainbow appears to be a large substantial arch in the sky; all which are in reality gross falsehoods. So *knavery* puts on the face of *justice*, *hypocrisy* and *superstition* wear the vizard of *piety*, *deceit* and *evil* are often clothed in the shapes and appearances of *truth* and *goodness*. Now logick helps us to strip off the outward disguise of things, and to behold them, and judge of them in their own nature.

There is yet a farther proof that our intellectual or rational *powers* need some assistance, and that is, because they are so frail and fallible in the present state; we are imposed upon *at home* as well as *abroad*: We are deceived by our *senses*, by our *imagination*s, by our *passions* and *appetites*, by the *authority* of men, by *education* and *custom*, &c. and we are led into frequent errors, by judging according to these false and flattering principles, rather than according to the nature of things. Something of this frailty is owing to our very *constitution*, man being compounded of flesh and spirit: Something of it arises from our *infant-state*, and our growing up by small degrees to manhood, so that we form a thousand judgments before our *reason* is mature. But there is still more of it owing to our *original defection* from God, and the foolish and evil dispositions that are found in fallen man: So that one great part of the *design of logick* is to guard us against the delusive influences of our meaner powers, to cure the mistakes of immature judgment, and to raise us in some measure from the ruins of our fall.

It is evident enough from all these things, that our *reason* needs the assistance of *art* in our inquiries after *truth* or *duty*; and without some skill and diligence in forming our judgments aright, we shall be led into frequent mistakes, both in matters of  
*science,*



science, and in matters of *practice*, and some of these mistakes may prove fatal too.

The *art of logick*, even as it assists us to gain the knowledge of the sciences, leads us on toward virtue and happiness; for all our *speculative acquaintance with things* should be made subservient to our better *conduct in civil and religious life*. This is infinitely more valuable than all speculations; and a wise man will use them chiefly for this better purpose.

All the good judgment and prudence that any man exerts in his common concerns of life, without the advantage of learning, is called *natural logick*: And it is but a higher advancement, and a farther assistance of our rational powers, that is designed by and expected from this *artificial logick*.

In order to attain this, we must inquire what are the *principal operations of the mind*, which are put forth in the exercise of our reason: And we shall find them to be these four, namely, *perception, judgment, argumentation and disposition*.

Now the *Art of Logick* is composed of these observations and rules, which men have made about these four operations of the mind, *perception, judgment, reasoning, and disposition*, in order to assist and improve them.

I. *Perception, conception, or apprehension*, is the mere simple contemplation of things offered to our minds, without affirming or denying any thing concerning them. So we conceive or think of *a horse, a tree, high, swift, slow, animal, time, motion, matter, mind, life, death, &c.* The *form* under which these things appear to the mind, or the result of our conception or apprehension, is called an *idea*.

II. *Judgment* is that operation of the mind, whereby we join two or more ideas together by one affirmation or negation; that is, we either affirm or deny

deny *this* to be *that*. So *This tree is high ; That horse is not swift ; The mind of man is a thinking being ; Mere matter has no thought belonging to it ; God is just ; Good men are often miserable in this world ; A righteous governor will make a difference betwixt the evil and the good ;* which sentences are the effect of judgment, and are called *propositions*.

III. *Argumentation* or *reasoning*, is that operation of the mind, whereby we infer one thing, that is, one proposition, from two or more propositions premised. Or it is the drawing a conclusion, which before was either unknown, or dark, or doubtful, from some propositions which are more known and evident. So when we have judged that *matter cannot think*, and that *the mind of man doth think*, we then infer and conclude, that *therefore the mind of man it not matter*.

So we judge that *A just governor will make a difference between the evil and the good ;* we judge also that *God is a just governor ;* and from thence we conclude, that *God will make a difference between the evil and the good*.

This argumentation may be carried on farther, thus, *God will one time or another make a difference between the good and the evil : But there is little or no difference made in this world : Therefore there must be another world wherein this difference shall be made*.

These *inferences* or *conclusions* are the effects of reasoning, and the three propositions taken all together are called a *syllogism* or *argument*.

IV. *Disposition* is that operation of the mind, whereby we put the ideas, propositions, and arguments, which we have formed concerning one subject, into such an order as is fittest to gain the clearest knowledge of it, to retain it longest, and to explain it to others in the best manner : Or, in short, it is the ranging of our thoughts in such order, as  
is

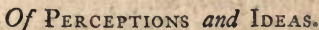
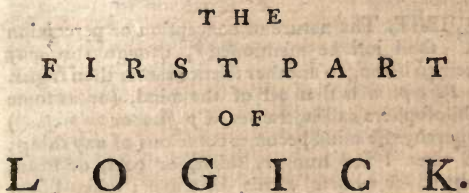
is best for our own and others conception and memory. The effect of this operation is called *method*. This very *description of the four operations of the mind and their effects, in this order*, is an instance or example of method.


Now as the art of logick assists our conceptions, so it gives us a *large* and *comprehensive* view of the subjects we inquire into, as well as a clear and distinct knowledge of them. As it regulates our *judgment* and our *reasoning*, so it secures us from mistakes, and gives us a *true* and *certain* knowledge of things; and as it furnishes us with *method*, so it makes our knowledge of things both *easy* and *regular*, and guards our thoughts from confusion.

*Logick* is divided into four parts, according to these four operations of the mind, which it directs; and therefore we shall treat of it in this order.

THE





 HE first part of *Logick* contains observations and precepts about the first operation of the mind, *perception* or *conception*: And since all our knowledge, how wide and large soever it grow, is founded upon our conception and ideas, here we shall consider,

1. *The general Nature of them.*
2. *The Objects of our Conception, or the archetypes or patterns of these Ideas.*
3. *The several Divisions of them.*
4. *The Words and Terms whereby our Ideas are expressed.*
5. *General Directions about our Ideas.*
6. *Special Rules to direct our Conceptions.*

## CHAP. I.

*Of the Nature of IDEAS.*

**FIRST**, The nature of conception or perception shall just be mentioned\*, though this may seem to belong to another science rather than *Logick*.

*Perception* is that act of the mind, (or as some philosophers call it, rather a *passion* or *impression*) whereby the mind becomes conscious of any thing; as when I feel hunger, thirst, or cold, or heat; when I see a horse, a tree, or a man; when I hear a human voice, or thunder, I am conscious of these things, and this is called *perception*. If I study, meditate, wish, or fear, I am conscious of these inward acts also, and my mind perceives its own *thoughts, wishes, fears, &c.*

An *idea* is generally defined a *representation of a thing in the mind*; it is a representation of something that we have *seen, felt, heard, &c.* or *been conscious of*. That notion or form of a horse, a tree, or a man, which is in the mind, is called the *idea* of a horse, a tree, or a man.

That notion of hunger, cold, sound, colour, thought, or wish, or fear, which is in the mind, is called the *idea* of hunger cold sound, wish, &c.

It is not the outward object, or thing which is *perceived*, namely, the horse, the man, &c. nor is it the very *perception* or *sense*, and *feeling*, namely, of hunger, or cold, &c. which is called the *idea*; but it is the *thing as it exists in the mind* by way of  
con-

\* *Note.* The words *conception* and *perception* are often used promiscuously, as I have done here, because I would not embarrass a learner with too many distinctions; but if I were to distinguish them, I would say *perception* is the consciousness of an object when present: *conception* is the forming an idea of the object whether present or absent.

conception or representation, that is properly called the *idea*, whether the object be present or absent.

As a horse, a man, a tree, are the outward objects of our perception, and the outward *archetypes*, or *patterns* of our *ideas*; so our own sensations of hunger, cold, &c. are also inward *archetypes*, or *patterns* of our *ideas*: But the *notions* or *pictures* of these things, as they are considered, or conceived in the mind, are precisely the *ideas* that we have to do with in *Logick*. To *see* a horse, or to *feel* cold, is one thing; to *think* of, and *converse* about a man, a horse, hunger, or cold, is another.

Among all these *ideas*, such as represent *bodies*, are generally called *images*, especially if the idea of the shape be included. Those inward representations which we have of *spirit*, *thought*, *love*, *hatred*, *cause*, *effect*, &c. are more *pure* and *mental ideas*, belonging more especially to the mind, and carry nothing of shape or sense in them. But I shall have occasion to speak more particularly of the original and the distinction of *ideas* in the third chapter. I proceed therefore now to consider the objects of our *ideas*.

## C H A P. II.

### *Of the Objects of* PERCEPTION.

#### S E C T. I.

##### *Of Being in general.*

THE object of *perception* is that which is represented in the idea, that which is the *archetype* or *pattern*, according to which the idea is formed;

and thus *judgments, propositions, reasons, and long discourses*, may all become the objects of perception; but in this place we speak chiefly of the *first* and more *simple* objects of it, before they are joined and formed into propositions or discourses.

Every object of our idea is called a *theme*, whether it be a *being* or *not-being*; for *not-being* may be proposed to our thoughts, as well as that which has a real being. But let us first treat of *beings*, and that in the largest extent of the word.

A *being* is considered as *possible*, or as *actual*.

When it is considered as *possible*, it is said to have an *essence* or *nature*; such were *all things before their creation*: When it is considered as *actual*, then it is said to have *existence* also; such are *all things which are created*, and GOD himself the Creator.

*Essence* therefore is but the very nature of any being, whether it be actually existing or no. A rose in winter has an *essence*, in summer it has *existence* also.

*Note.* There is but one Being which includes *existence* in the very *essence* of it, and that is GOD, who therefore actually *exists* by natural and eternal necessity: But the actual existence of every creature is very distinct from its *essence*, for it may *be*, or may *not be*, as GOD pleases.

Again, Every *being* is considered either as subsisting in and by itself, and then it is called a *substance*; or it subsists in and by another, and then it is called a *mode* or *manner* of being. Though few writers allow *mode* to be called a being in the same perfect sense as a *substance* is; and some *modes* have evidently more of real *entity* or *being* than others, as will appear when we come to treat of them. These things will furnish us with matter for larger discourse in the following sections.

## S E C T. II.

*Of SUBSTANCES and their various Kinds.*

**A** *Substance* is a being which can subsist by itself, without dependence upon any other created being. The notion of *subsisting by itself*, gives occasion to logicians to call to it a *substance*. So a horse, a house, wood, stone, water, fire, a spirit, a body, an angel, are called *substances*, because they depend on nothing but God for their existence.

It has been usual also in the description of *substance* to add, it is that which is the subject of *modes* or *accidents*; a *body* is the substance or subject, its *shape* is the mode.

But lest we be led into mistakes, let us here take notice, that when a substance is said to *subsist without dependence upon another created being*; all that we mean is, that it cannot be annihilated, or utterly destroyed and reduced to nothing, by any power inferior to that of our Creator; though its present particular form, nature and properties, may be altered and destroyed by many inferior causes; a horse may die and turn to dust; wood may be turned into fire, smoke, and ashes; a house into rubbish, and water into ice or vapour; but the substance or matter of which they are made, still remains, though the forms and shapes of it are altered. A body may cease to be a house or a horse, but it is a body still; and in this sense it depends only upon God for its existence.

Among *substances* some are *thinking* or conscious beings, or have a power of thought, such as the *mind* of man, *God*, *angels*. Some are *extended* and *solid*, or *impenetrable*, that is, they have dimensions, of length, breadth, and depth, and have also a power of resistance, or to exclude every thing of the same kind from being in the same place. This is the proper character of *matter* or *body*.

As for the idea of *Space*, whether it be *void* or



*full*, that is, a *vacuum* or a *plenum*, whether it be interspersed among all bodies, or may be supposed to reach beyond the bounds of the creation, it is an argument too long and too hard to be disputed in this place what the nature of it is: It has been much debated whether it be a real substance, or a mere conception of the mind; whether it be the immensity of the divine nature, or the mere order of co-existent beings; whether it be the manner of our conception of the distances of bodies, or a mere nothing. Therefore I drop the mention of it here, and refer the reader to the *first essay* among the *Philosophical Essays* by I. W. published 1733.

Now, if we seclude Space out of our consideration, there will remain but two sorts of substances in the world; that is, *Matter* and *Mind*, or as we otherwise call them, *Body* and *Spirit*; at least we have no ideas of any other substance but these\*.

Among

\* Because men have different ideas and notions of *Substance*, I thought it not proper intirely to omit all accounts of them, and therefore have thrown them into the margin.

Some philosophers suppose that our acquaintance with *matter* or *mind*, reaches no farther than the mere properties of them, and that there is a sort of unknown being, which is the *substance* or the *subject* by which these properties of *solid extention* and of *cogitation* are supported, and in which these properties inhere or exist. But perhaps this notion arises only from our turning the mere abstracted or *logical* notion of *substance* or *self-subsisting*, into the notion of a distinct *physical* or natural being, without any necessity. Solid extention seems to me to be the very substance of *matter*, or of all bodies; and a *power of thinking*, which is *always in act*, seems to be the very substance of all *spirits*; for *God* himself is an intelligent, almighty power; nor is there any need to seek for any other secret and unknown being, or *abstracted substance*, intirely distinct from these, in order to support the several modes or properties of *matter* or *mind*.

Among substances, some are called *simple*, some are *compound*, whether the words be taken in a *philosophical* or a *vulgar* sense.

*Simple substances*, in a *philosophical* sense, are either *spirits*, which have no manner of composition in them, and in this sense God is called a *simple being*; or they are the first principles of bodies, which are usually called *elements*, of which all other bodies are compounded: *Elements* are such substances as cannot be resolved, or reduced, into two or more substances of different kinds.

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mind, for these two ideas are sufficient for that purpose; therefore I rather think these are *substances*.

It must be confessed, when we say, *Spirit is a thinking substance*, and *Matter is an extended solid substance*, we are sometimes ready to imagine that extension and solidity are but mere modes and properties of a certain unknown substance or subject which supports them, and which we call *body*; and that a power of thinking is but a mere mode and property of some unknown substance or subject which supports it, and which we call *spirit*: but I rather take this to be a mere mistake, which we are led into by the grammatical form and use of words; and perhaps our logical way of thinking by *substances* and *modes*, as well as our grammatical way of talking by *substantives* and *adjectives*, help to delude us into the supposition.

However, that I may not be wanting to any of my readers, I would let them know Mr. *Locke's* opinion, which has obtained much in the present age; and it is this: "That our idea of any particular substance is only such a combination of simple ideas as represent that thing as subsisting by itself, in which the supposed or confused idea of substance (such as it is) is always ready to offer itself. It is a conjunction of ideas co-existing in such a cause of their union, and makes the whole subject subsist by itself, though the cause of their union be unknown; and our general idea of substance arises from the self-subsistence of this collection of ideas."

Now if this notion of substance rest here, and be considered

The various sects of philosophers have attributed the honour of this name to various things. The Peripateticks, or followers of *Aristotle*, made *Fire, Air, Earth, and Water*, to be the four elements, of which all earthly things were compounded; and they supposed the heavens to be a *quintessence*, or *fifth* sort of body, distinct from all these: But since experimental philosophy and mathematicks have been better understood, this doctrine has been abundantly refuted. The *Chemists* make *Spirit, Salt, Sulphur, Water, and Earth*, to be their *five* elements, because they can reduce all terrestrial things to these five: This seems to come nearer the truth; though

sidered merely as an-unknown cause of the union of properties, it is much more easy to be admitted: but if we proceed to suppose a sort of real, substantial, distinct being, different from solid *quantity* or *extension* in bodies, and different from a *power of thinking* in spirits, in my opinion it is the introduction of a needless scholastical notion into the real nature of things, and then fancying it to have a real existence.

Mr. *Locks*, in his *Essay of Human Understanding*, Book II. chap. 22. §. 2. seems to ridicule this common idea of *substance*, which men have generally supposed to be a sort of *substratum* distinct from all properties whatsoever, and to be the support of all properties. Yet in Book IV. chap. 3. §. 6. he seems to suppose there may be some such unknown *substratum*, which may be capable of receiving the properties both of *matter* and of *mind*, namely, *extension, solidity, and cogitation*; for he supposes it possible for *God* to add *cogitation* to that *substance* which is *corporeal*, and thus to cause *matter* to *think*. If this be true, then spirits (for ought we know) may be *corporeal beings*, or *thinking bodies*, which is a doctrine too favourable to the *mortality of the soul*. But I leave these debates to the philosophers of the age, and will not be too positive in my opinion of this abstruse subject.

See more of this argument in *Philosophical Essays*, before cited, essay 2d.



though they are not all agreed in this enumeration of elements. In short, our modern philosophers generally suppose *matter* or *body* to be one simple principle, or *solid extension*, which being diversified by its various shapes, quantities, motions and situations, makes all the varieties that are found in the universe; and therefore they make little use of the word *element*.

*Compound substances* are made up of two or more *simple* substances: So every thing in this whole material creation, that can be reduced by the art of man into two or more different principles or substances, is a *compound body* in the philosophical sense.

But if we take the words *simple* and *compound* in a vulgar sense, then all those are simple substances, which are generally esteemed uniform in their natures. So every herb is called a *simple*; and every metal a *mineral*; though the chemist perhaps may find all his several elements in each of them. So a needle is a *simple* body, being only made of steel; but a sword or a knife is a *compound*, because its haft or handle is made of materials different from the blade. So the *Bark of Peru*, or the *Juice of Sorrel*, is a *simple* medicine: But when the apothecaries art has mingled several simples together, it becomes a *compound*, as *Diafcoridium*, or *Mithridate*.

The terms of *pure* and *mixt*, when applied to bodies, are much akin to *simple* and *compound*. So a guinea is *pure* gold, if it has nothing but gold in it, without any alloy of baser metal: But if any other mineral or metal be mingled with it, it is called a *mixt* substance or body.

Substances are also divided into *animate* and *inanimate*. Animated substances are either *animal* or *vegetable* \*.

Some

\* Note, *Vegetables* as well as *animals*, have gotten the name of *animated* substances, because some of the ancients supposed herbs and plants, beasts and birds, &c. to have a sort of *souls* distinct from matter, or *body*.

Some of the *animated substances* have various organical or instrumental parts, fitted for a variety of motions from place to place, and a spring of life within themselves, as beasts, birds, fishes, and insects; these are called *animals*. Other *animated substances* are called *vegetables*, which have within themselves the principles of another sort of life and growth, and of various productions of leaves, flowers and fruit, such as we see in plants, herbs and trees.

And there are other substances, which are called *inanimate*, because they have no sort of life in them, as earth, stone, air, water, &c.

There is also one sort of substance, or being, which is *compounded* of *body* and *mind*, or a rational spirit united to an animal; such is mankind. *Angels*, or any other beings of the spiritual and invisible world, who have assumed visible shapes for a season, can hardly be reckoned among this order of compounded beings; because they drop their bodies, and divest themselves of those visible shapes, when their particular message is performed, and thereby shew that these bodies do not belong to their natures.

### S E C T. III.

*Of MODES, and their various kinds, and first of essential and accidental Modes.*

THE next sort of objects which are represented in our ideas, are called *Modes*, or *manners of being* †. A

† *Note*, The term *mode* is by some authors applied chiefly to the *relations*, or relative manners of being. But in logical treatises it is often used in a larger sense, and extends to all *attributes* whatsoever, and includes the most essential and inward properties, as well as outward respects and relations, and reaches to *actions* themselves as well as *manners of action*.

A *mode* is that which cannot subsist in and of itself, but is always esteemed as belonging to, and subsisting by the help of some *substance*, which for that reason is called its *subject*. A mode must depend on that substance for its very existence and being; and that not as a being depends on its *cause* (for so *substances* themselves depend on God their Creator;) but the *very being of a mode* depends on some substance for its *subject*, in which it is, or to which it belongs; so motion, shape, quantity, weight, are *modes* of the *body*; knowledge, wit, folly, love, doubting, judging, are *modes* of the *mind*; for the one cannot subsist without *body*, and the other cannot subsist without *mind*.

*Modes* have their several divisions, as well as substances.

I. Modes are either *essential* or *accidental*.

An *essential mode* or *attribute*, is that which belongs to the very nature or essence of the subject wherein it is; and the subject can never have the same nature without it; such is *roundness* in a bowl, *hardness* in a stone, *softness* in water, *vital motion* in an animal, *solidity* in matter, *thinking* in a spirit; for though that piece of wood which is now a bowl may be made *square*, yet if *roundness* be taken away, it is no longer a bowl: So that very flesh and bones, which is now an *animal*, may be without *life* or inward motion; but if all motion be intirely gone, it is no longer an animal, but a carcass: So if a *body* or matter be divested of *solidity*, it is a mere void space, or nothing; and if *spirit* be intirely without *thinking*, I have no idea of any thing that is left in it; therefore, so far as I am able to judge, *consciousness* must be its essential attribute †. Thus all the perfections of God are called his *attributes*, for he cannot be without them.

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† Note, When I call solid extension an essential *mode* or attribute of *matter*, and a power of thinking an essential

An *essential mode* is either *primary* or *secondary*.

A *primary essential mode*, is the first or chief thing that constitutes any being in its particular essence or nature, and makes it to be that which it is, and distinguishes it from all other beings: This is called the *difference* in the definition of things, of which hereafter: So *roundness* is the primary essential mode or difference of a bowl; the *meeting* of *two lines* is the primary essential mode, or the difference of an *angle*; the *perpendicularity* of these lines to each other, is the difference of a *right angle*: *Solid extension* is the primary attribute or difference of *matter*: *Consciousness*, or at least a *power of thinking*, is the difference or primary attribute of a *spirit*\*; and to *fear* and *love* God, is the primary attribute of a *pious man*.

A *secondary essential mode*, is any other attribute of a thing, which is not of primary consideration: This is called a *property*: Sometimes indeed it goes towards making up the essence, especially of a *complex being*, so far as we are acquainted with it; sometimes it depends upon, and follows from the essence of it; so *volubility*, or *aptness* to roll, is the property of a bowl, and is derived from its *roundness*. *Mobility*, and *figure*, or *shape*, are properties of *matter*; and it is the property of a *pious man* to *love his neighbour*.

An *accidental mode*, or an *accident*, is such a mode as is not *necessary* to the being of a thing, for the subject may be without it, and yet remain of the same nature that it was before; or it is that mode

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*tial mode* or attribute of a *spirit*, I do it in compliance with common forms of speech: But perhaps in reality these are the very *essences* or *substances* themselves, and the most substantial ideas that we can form of *body* and *spirit*, and have no need of any (we know not what) *substratum*, or unintelligible substance, to support them in their existence or being.

\* See the foregoing note.

which may be separated or abolished from its subject: So *smoothness* or *roughness*, *blackness* or *whiteness*, *motion* or *rest*, are the accidents of a bowl; for these may be all changed, and yet the body remain a bowl still: *Learning*, *justice*, *folly*, *sickness*, *health*, are the accidents of a man: *Motion*, *squareness*, or any *particular shape* or *size*, are the accidents of *body*: Yet *shape* and *size* in general are essential modes of it; for a body must have some size and shape, nor can it be without them: So *hope*, *fear*, *wishing*, *assenting*, and *doubting*, are accidents of the *mind*, though *thinking* in general seems to be essential to it.

Here observe, that the name of *accident* has been oftentimes given by the old Peripatetick philosophers to all modes, whether essential or accidental; but the moderns confine this word *accident* to the sense in which I have described it.

Here it should be noted also, that though the word *property* be limited sometimes in logical treatises to the *secondary essential mode*, yet it is used in common language to signify these four sorts of *modes*; of which some are *essential*, and some *accidental*.

1. Such as belong to *every* subject of that kind, but *not only* to those subjects. So *yellow colour* and *ductility* are properties of gold; they belong to *all* gold, but *not only* to gold: for saffron is also *yellow*, and lead is *ductile*.

2. Such as belong only to *one* kind of subject, but not to *every* subject of that kind. So *learning*, *reading*, and *writing*, are properties of *human nature*; they belong only to man, but *not* to *all* men.

3. Such as belong to *every* subject of one kind, and *only* to them, but *not always*. So *speech* or *language* is a property of *man*, for it belongs to *all* men, and to men *only*; but men are *not always* speaking.

4. Such as belong to *every* subject of one kind, and to them *only* and *always*. So *shape* and *divisibility*



*bility* are properties of *body*; so *omniscience* and *omnipotence* are properties of the *divine Nature*; for in this sense properties and attributes are the same; and, except in logical treatises, there is scarce any distinction made between them. These are called *Propria quarto modo* in the schools, or *Properties of the fourth sort*.

*Note.* Where there is any one *property* or *essential attribute* so superior to the rest, that it appears plainly that all the rest are derived from it, and such as is sufficient to give a full distinction of that subject from all other subjects, this attribute or property is called the *essential difference*, as is before declared; and we commonly say, the *essence* of the thing consists in it; so the *essence of matter* in general seems to consist in *solidity*, or *solid extension*. But for the most part we are so much at a loss in finding out the intimate essence of particular natural bodies, that we are forced to distinguish the *essential difference* of most things by a *combination* of properties. So a *sparrow* is a bird which has such coloured feathers, and such a particular size, shape and motion. So *wormwood* is an herb which has such a leaf of such a colour, and shape, and taste, and such a root and stalk. So beasts and fishes, minerals, metals, and works of art, as well as of nature, are distinguished by such a *collection of properties*.

#### S E C T. IV.

##### *The farther divisions of MODE.*

THE *second* division of Modes is into *absolute* and *relative*. An *absolute mode* is that which belongs to its subject, without respect to any other beings whatsoever: But a *relative mode* is derived from the regard that one being has to others. So *roundness* and *smoothness* are the *absolute* modes of a bowl; for if there were nothing else existing in  
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the whole creation, a bowl might be *round* and *smooth*: But *greatness* and *smallness* are relative modes; for the very ideas of them are derived merely from the comparison of one being with others: A bowl of four inches diameter is *very great*, compared with one of an inch and a half; but it is *very small* in comparison of another bowl, whose diameter is eighteen or twenty inches. *Motion* is the absolute mode of a body, but *swiftness* or *slowness* are relative ideas; for the motion of a bowl on a bowling-green is *swift*, when compared with a snail; and it is *slow* when compared with a cannon-bullet.

These *relative modes* are largely treated of by some logical and metaphysical writers under the name of *relations*: And these relations themselves are farther subdivided into *such as arise from the nature of things*, and *such as arise merely from the operation of our minds*; one sort are called *real relations*; the other *mental*; so the *likeness* of one egg to another is a *real* relation, because it arises from the real nature of things; for whether there was any man or mind to conceive it or no, one egg would be like another: But when we consider an egg as a *noun substantive* in grammar, or as signified by the letters *egg*, these are *mere mental* relations, and derive their very nature from the mind of man. These sort of relations are called by the schools *entia rationis*, or *second notions*, which have no real being, but depend entirely on the operation of the mind.

III. The *third* division of modes shew us they are either *intrinsic* or *extrinsic*. *Intrinsic modes* are conceived to be in the subject or substance, as when we say a globe is *round*, or *swift*, *rolling*, or at *rest*: Or when we say, a man is *tall*, or *learned*, these are *intrinsic modes*: But *extrinsic modes* are such as arise from something that is not in the subject or substance itself; but it is a manner of being which some substances attain by reason of something that

is external or foreign to the subject; as, *This globe lies within two yards of the wall*: or, *This man is beloved, or hated*. Note. Such sort of modes as this last example, are called *external denominations*.

IV. There is a *fourth* division much akin to this, whereby modes are said to be *inherent* or *adherent*, that is, *proper* or *improper*. *Adherent* or *improper modes*, arise from the joining of some accidental substance to the chief subject, which yet may be separated from it; so when a *bowl is wet*, or a *boy is clothed*, these are *adherent modes*; for the water and the cloaths are distinct substances, which adhere to the *bowl*, or to the *boy*: But when we say, the *bowl is swift* or *round*; when we say, the *boy is strong* or *witty*, these are *proper inherent modes*, for they have a sort of *in being* in the substance itself, and do not arise from the addition of any other substance to it.

V. *Action* and *passion* are modes or manners which belong to substances, and should not intirely be omitted here. When a *smith* with a *hammer* strikes a piece of *iron*, the *hammer* and the *smith* are both *agents* or subjects of action; the one is the *prime* or *supreme*, the other the *subordinate*: The *iron* is the *patient*, or the subject of passion, in a philosophical sense, because it receives the operation of the agent: Though this sense of the words *passion* and *patient* differs much from the vulgar meaning of them\*.

VI. The *sixth* division of modes may be into *physical*, that is, *natural*, *civil*, *moral*, and *supernatural*. So when we consider the apostle *Paul*, who was a little man, a Roman by the privilege of his birth,

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\* Note. *Agent* signifies the doer, *patient* the sufferer, *action* is doing, *passion* is suffering: Agent and action have retained their original and philosophical sense, though patient and passion have acquired a very different meaning in common language.



a man of virtue or honesty, and an inspired apostle; his *low stature* is a *physical* mode, his being a *Roman* is a *civil* privilege, his *honesty* is a *moral* consideration, and his being *inspired* is *supernatural*.

VII. Modes belong either to *body* or to *spirit*, or to *both*. Modes of *body* belong only to matter or to corporeal beings; and these are *shape*, *size*, *situation* or *place*, &c. Modes of *spirit* belong only to minds; such are *knowledge*, *assent*, *dissent*, *doubting*, *reasoning*, &c. Modes which belong to both have been sometimes called *mixt modes*, or *human modes*, for these are only found in human nature, which is compounded both of body and spirit; such are *sensation*, *imagination*, *passion*, &c. in all which there is a concurrence of the operations both of mind and body, that is, of animal and intellectual nature.

But the *modes of body* may be yet farther distinguished. Some of them are *primary modes* or *qualities*, for they belong to bodies considered in themselves, whether there were any man to take notice of them or no; such are those before-mentioned, namely *shape*, *size*, *situation*, &c. *Secondary qualities*, or *modes*, are such ideas as we ascribe to bodies on account of the various impressions which are made on the senses of men by them; and these are called *sensible qualities*, which are very numerous; such are all *colours*, as *red* *green*, *blue*, &c. such are all *sounds*, as *sharp*, *shrill*, *loud*, *hoarse*; all *tastes*, as *sweet*, *bitter*, *sour*; all *smells*, whether *pleasant*, *offensive*, or *indifferent*; and all *tactile qualities*, or such as affect the *touch* or *feeling*, namely, *heat*, *cold*, &c. These are properly called *secondary qualities*; for though we are ready to conceive them as existing in the very bodies themselves which affect our senses, yet true philosophy has most undeniably proved, that all these are really various ideas or perceptions excited in human nature, by the different impressions that bodies make upon our senses by their *primary modes*, that is, by means

of the different shape, size, motion, and position of those little invisible parts that compose them. Thence it follows, that a *secondary quality*, considered as in the bodies themselves, is nothing else but a power or aptitude to produce such sensations in us: See *Locke's Essay on the Understanding*, Book II. Chap. 8.

VIII. I might add, in the last place, that as *modes* belong to *substances*, so there are some also that are but *modes of other modes*: For though they subsist in and by the *substance*, as the original subject of them, yet they are properly and directly attributed to some mode of that substance. *Motion* is the mode of a body; but the *swiftness*, or *slowness* of it, or its *direction to the north or south*, are but modes of motion. *Walking* is the mode or manner of a man, or of a beast; but *walking gracefully* implies a manner or mode superadded to that action. All comparative and superlative degrees of any quality, are the *modes of a mode*, as *swifter* implies a greater *measure of swiftness*.

It would be too tedious here to run through all the *modes*, *accidents*, and *relations*, at large, that belong to various beings, and are copiously treated of in *general*, in the science called *Metaphysics*, or more properly *Ontology*: They are also treated of in *particular* in those sciences which have assumed them severally as their proper subjects.

## S E C T. V.

*Of the ten Categories. Of substance modified.*

WE have thus given an account of the two chief objects of our ideas, namely, *substances* and *modes*, and their various kinds: And in these last sections we have briefly comprised the greatest part of what is necessary in the famous ten ranks of being, called the ten *predicaments* or *categories* of *Aristotle*,

*Aristotle*, on which there are endless volumes of discourses formed by several of his followers. But that the reader may not utterly be ignorant of them, let him know the names are these: *Substance, quantity, quality, relation, action, passion, where, when, situation, and cloathing*. It would be mere loss of time to shew how loose, how injudicious, and even ridiculous this tenfold division of things is: And whatsoever farther relates to them, and which may tend to improve useful knowledge, should be sought in *Ontology*, and in other sciences.

Besides *substance* and *mode*, some of the moderns would have us consider the *substance modified*, as a distinct object of our ideas; but I think there is nothing more that need be said on this subject, than this, namely, There is some difference between a substance when it is considered *with all its modes* about it, or clothed in all its manners of existence, and when it is distinguished from them, and considered naked *without them*.

## S E C T. VI.

*Of Not-Being.*

**A**S *being* is divided into *substance* and *mode*, so we may consider *not-being* with regard to both these.

I. *Not-being* is considered as excluding all substance, and then all modes also are necessarily excluded; and this we call *pure nihility, or mere nothing*.

This *nothing* is taken either in a *vulgar* or a *philosophical* sense; so we say, *There is nothing in the cup*, in a vulgar sense, when we mean there is *no liquor in it*; but we cannot say, *There is nothing in the cup*, in a strict philosophical sense, while there is *air* in it, and perhaps a million of *rays of light* are there.

II. *Not-being*, as it has relation to *modes* or manners

ners of *being*, may be considered either as a mere *negation*, or as a *privation*.

A *negation* is the absence of that which does not naturally belong to the thing we are speaking of, or which has no right, obligation or necessity to be present with it; as when we say, *a stone is inanimate*, or *blind*, or *deaf*, that is, it has no *life*, nor *sight*, nor *hearing*; or when we say *a carpenter* or *a fisherman is unlearned*, these are mere *negations*.

But a *privation* is the absence of what does naturally belong to the thing we are speaking of, or which ought to be present with it; as when a *man* or a *horse* is *deaf*, or *blind*, or *dead*; or if a *physician* or a *divine* be *unlearned*, these are called *privations*: So the *sinfulness* of any human action is said to be a *privation*; for *sin* is that want of conformity to the law of God, which ought to be found in every action of man.

*Note.* There are some writers who make all sorts of *relative modes* or *relations*, as well as all external denominations, to be mere creatures of the mind, and *entia rationis*, and then they rank them also under the general head of *not-beings*; but it is my opinion, that whatsoever may be determined concerning mere mental relations and external denominations, which seem to have something less of entity or being in them, yet there are many *real relations*, which ought not to be reduced to so low a class; such are the *situation* of bodies, their mutual *distances*, their particular *proportions* and *measures*, the notions of *fatherhood*, *brotherhood*, *sonship*, &c. all which are relative ideas. The very essence of *virtue* or *holiness* consists in the conformity of our actions to the rule of right reason, or the law of God: The nature and essence of *sincerity*, is the conformity of our words and actions to our thoughts, all which are but *mere relations*; and I think we must not reduce such positive beings as *piety*, and *virtue*, and *truth*, to the rank of non-entities,

entities, which have nothing real in them, though *sin*, (or rather the sinfulness of an action) may be properly called a not-being, for it is a want of piety and virtue. This is the most usual, and perhaps the justest way of representing these matters.

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## C H A P. III.

*Of the several Sorts of Perceptions or Ideas.*

**I**DEAS may be divided with regard to their *original*, their *nature*, their *objects*, and their *qualities*.

## S E C T. I.

*Of sensible, spiritual, and abstracted Ideas.*

**T**HERE has been a great controversy about the *origin* of ideas, namely, whether any of our ideas are *innate* or no, that is, born with us, and naturally belonging to our minds. Mr. *Locke* utterly denies it; others as positively affirm it. Now, though this controversy may be compromised, by allowing that there is a sense wherein our first idea of some things may be said to be innate, (as I have shewn in some remarks on Mr. *Locke's Essay*, which have lain long by me) yet it does not belong to this place and business to have that point debated at large, nor will it hinder our pursuit of the present work to pass over it in silence.

There is a sufficient ground to say, that all our ideas, with regard to their *original*, may be divided into three sorts, namely, *sensible*, *spiritual*, and *abstracted* ideas.

I. *Sensible* or *corporeal* ideas, are derived originally



nally from our senses, and from the communication which the soul has with the animal body in this present state; such are the notions we frame of all *colours, sounds, tastes, figures, or shapes and motions*; for our senses being conversant about particular sensible objects, become the occasions of several distinct perceptions in the mind; and thus we come by the ideas of *yellow, white, heat, cold, soft, hard, bitter, sweet*, and all those which we call *sensible* qualities. All the ideas which we have of *body*, and the sensible modes and properties that belong to it, seem to be derived from *sensation*.

And howsoever these may be treasured up in the memory, and by the work of fancy may be increased, diminished, compounded, divided, and diversified, (which we are ready to call *our invention*) yet they all derive their first nature and being from something that has been let into our minds by one or other of our senses. If I think of a *golden mountain*, or a *sea of liquid fire*, yet the single ideas of *sea, fire, mountain* and *gold*, came into my thoughts at first by sensation; the mind has only compounded them.

II. *Spiritual* \* or *intellectual ideas*, are those which we gain by reflecting on the nature and actions of our own souls, and turning our thoughts within ourselves, and observing what is transacted in our own minds. Such are the ideas we have of *thought, assent, dissent, judging, reason, knowledge, understanding, will, love, fear, hope*.

By *sensation* the soul contemplates things (as it were) out of itself, and gains corporeal representations or sensible ideas: By *reflection* the soul contemplates itself, and things within itself, and by this means it gains spiritual ideas, or representations of things intellectual.

Here

\* Here the word *spiritual* is used in a mere natural, and not in a religious sense.



Here it may be noted, though the first original of these two sorts of ideas, namely, *sensible* and *spiritual*, may be intirely owing to these two principles, sensation, and reflection, yet the *recollection* and fresh excitation of them may be owing to a thousand other occasions and occurrences of life. We could never inform a man who was born blind or deaf what we mean by the words *yellow*, *blue*, *red*, or by the words *loud* or *shrill*, nor convey any just ideas of these things to his mind, by all the powers of language, unless he has experienced those sensations of sound and colour; nor could we ever gain the ideas of *thought*, *judgment*, *reason*, *doubting*, *hoping*, &c. by all the words that man could invent, without turning our thoughts inward upon the actions of our own souls. Yet when once we have attained these ideas by sensation and reflection, they may be excited afresh by the use of names, words, signs, or by any thing else that has been connected with them in our thoughts; for when two or more ideas have been associated together, whether it be by custom, or accident, or design, the one presently brings the other to mind.

III. Besides these two which we have named, there is a *third* sort of ideas, which are commonly called *abstracted ideas*, because though the original ground or occasion of them may be sensation, or reflection, or both, yet these ideas are framed by another act of the mind, which we usually call *abstraction*. Now the word *abstraction* signifies *a withdrawing some parts of an idea from other parts of it*, by which means such abstracted ideas are formed, as neither represent any thing corporeal or spiritual, that is, any thing peculiar or proper to mind or body. Now these are of two kinds.

Some of these abstracted ideas are the most *absolute*, general and universal conceptions of things, considered in themselves, without respect to others; such

such as *entity* or *being*, and *not-being*, *essence*, *existence*, *act*, *power*, *substance*, *mode*, *accident*, &c.

The other sort of abstracted ideas is *relative*, as when we compare several things together, and consider merely the relations of one thing to another, intirely dropping the subjects of those relations, whether they be corporeal or spiritual; such are our ideas of *cause*, *effect*, *likeness*, *unlikeness*, *subject*, *object*, *identity*, or *sameness*, and *contrariety*, *order*, and other things which are treated of in *Ontology*.

Most of the terms of art in several sciences may be ranked under this head of *abstracted ideas*, as *noun*, *pronoun*, *verb*, in grammar, and the several particles of speech, as *wherefore*, *therefore*, *when*, *how*, *although*, *howsoever*, &c. So *connections*, *transitions*, *similitudes*, *tropes*, and their various forms in rhetoric.

These abstractive ideas, whether absolute or relative, cannot so properly be said to derive their immediate, complete and distinct original, either from sensation, or reflection, (1.) Because the nature and the actions both of body and spirit give us occasion to frame exactly the same ideas of *essence*, *mode*, *cause*, *effect*, *likeness*, *contrariety*, &c. Therefore these cannot be called either *sensible* or *spiritual* ideas, for they are not exact representations either of the peculiar qualities or actions of spirit or body, but seem to be a distinct kind of idea framed in the mind, to represent our most general conceptions of things, or their relations to one another, without any regard to their natures, whether they be *corporeal* or *spiritual*. And, (2.) the same general ideas, of *cause* and *effect*, *likeness*, &c. may be transferred to a thousand other kinds of being, whether bodily or spiritual. besides those from whence we first derived them: Even those abstracted ideas, which might be first occasioned by *bodies*, may be as properly afterward attributed to *spirits*.

Now,

Now, though Mr. *Locke* supposes *sensation* and *reflection* to be the only two springs of all ideas, and that these two are sufficient to furnish our minds with all that rich variety of ideas which we have; yet *abstraction* is certainly a different act of the mind, whence these abstracted ideas have their original; though perhaps *sensation* or *reflection* may furnish us with all the first objects and occasions whence these abstracted ideas are excited and derived. Nor in this sense or view of things can I think Mr. *Locke* himself would deny my representation of the original of abstracted ideas, nor forbid them to stand for a distinct *species*.

*Note*, Though we have divided ideas in this chapter into three sorts, namely, *sensible*, *spiritual*, and *abstracted*, yet it may not be amiss just to take notice here, that a *man* may be called a *compound substance*, being made up of body and mind, and the *modes* which arise from this composition are called *mixed modes*, such as *sensation*, *passion*, *discourse*, &c. so the *ideas* of this substance or being, called *man*, and of these mixed modes, may be called *mixt ideas*, for they are not properly and strictly *spiritual*, *sensible*, or *abstracted*. See a much larger account of every part of this chapter in the *Philosophical Essays*, by *I. Watts*, Essay III. IV. &c.

## S E C T. II.

*Of simple and complex, compound and collective Ideas.*

**I**DEAS considered in their nature, are either *simple* or *complex*.

A *simple idea* is one uniform idea, which cannot be divided or distinguished by the mind of man into two or more ideas; such are a multitude of our sensations; as the idea of *Sweet*, *bitter*, *cold*, *heat*, *white*, *red*, *blue*, *hard*, *soft*, *motion*, *rest* and

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perhaps

perhaps *extension* and *duration*: Such are also many of our spiritual ideas; such as *thought*, *will*, *wish*, *knowledge*, &c.

A *complex idea* is made by joining two or more simple ideas together; as a *square*, a *triangle*, a *cube*, a *pen*, a *table*, *reading*, *writing*, *truth*, *falsehood*, a *body*, a *man*, a *horse*, an *angel*, a *heavy body*, a *swift horse*, &c. Every thing that can be divided by the mind into two or more ideas is called *complex*.

*Complex ideas* are often considered as *single* and *distinct* beings, though they may be made up of several *simple ideas*; so a *body*, a *spirit*, a *house*, a *tree*, a *flower*. But when several of these ideas of a *different kind* are joined together, which are wont to be considered as distinct single beings, this is called a *compound idea*, whether these united ideas be simple or complex. So a man is compounded of *body* and *spirit*, so *mithridate* is a *compound medicine*, because it is made of many different ingredients: This I have shewn under the doctrine of *substances*. And *modes* also may be compounded; *harmony* is a compound idea made up of *different sounds united*: so several *different virtues* must be united to make up the compounded idea or character, either of a *hero*, or a *saint*.

But when many ideas of the *same kind* are joined together and united in one name, or under one view, it is called a *collective idea*; so an *army* or a *parliament*, is a collection of men; a *dictionary* or *nomenclatura*, is a collection of words; a *flock* is a collection of sheep; a *forest*, or *grove*, a collection of trees; an *heap*, is a collection of sand, or corn, or dust, &c. a *city*, is a collection of houses; a *nosegay*, is a collection of flowers; a *month*, or a *year*, is a collection of days; and a *thousand*, is a collection of units.

The precise difference between a *compound* and *collective idea* is this, that a *compound idea* unites things

things of a different kind, but a *collective idea* things of the same kind: Though this distinction in some cases is not accurately observed, and custom oftentimes uses the word *compound* for *collective*.

## S E C T II.

*Of universal and particular Ideas, real and imaginary.*

**I**DEAS, according to their *objects*, may first be divided into *particular* or *universal*.

A *particular idea* is that which represents one thing only.

Sometimes the one thing is represented in a loose and indeterminate manner, as when we say, *some man, any man, one man, another man; some horse, any horse; one city, or another;* which is called by the schools *individuum vagum*.

Sometimes the *particular idea* represents one thing in a determinate manner, and then it is called a *singular idea*; such is *Bucephalus*, or *Alexander's horse*, *Cicero the orator*, *Peter the apostle*, the palace of *Versailles*, *this book*, *that river*, the *New Forest*, or the city of *London*: That idea which represents one particular determinate thing to me, is called a *singular idea*, whether it be simple, or complex, or compound.

The *object* of any particular idea, as well as the *idea* itself, is sometimes called an *individual*: So *Peter* is an individual man, *London* is an individual city. So *this book*, *one horse*, *another horse*, are all *individuals*; though the word *individual* is more usually limited to one *singular*, *certain*, and *determined* object.

An *universal idea*, is that which represents a common nature agreeing to several particular things; so a *horse*, a *man*, or a *book*, are called



*universal ideas*; because they agree to all *horses*, *men*, or *books*.

And I think it not amiss to intimate in this place, that these *universal ideas* are formed by that act of the mind which is called *abstraction*, that is, a withdrawing some part of an idea from other parts of it: For when *singular ideas* are first let into the mind by sensation or reflection, then, in order to make them *universal*, we leave out, or drop all those peculiar and determinate characters, qualities, modes, or circumstances, which belong merely to any particular individual being, and by which it differs from other beings; and we only contemplate those properties of it, wherein it agrees with other beings.

Though it must be confessed, that the name of *abstracted ideas* is sometimes attributed to *universal ideas*, both *sensible* or *spiritual*, yet this abstraction is not so great, as when we drop out of our idea every *sensible* or *spiritual* representation, and retain nothing but the most *general* and *absolute* conceptions of things, or their mere *relations* to one another, without any regard to their particular natures, whether they be *sensible* or *spiritual*. And it is to this kind of conceptions we more properly give the name of *abstracted ideas*, as in the first section of this chapter.

An *universal idea* is either *general* or *spiritual*.

A *general idea* is called by the schools a *genus*; and it is one common nature agreeing to several other common natures. So *animal* is a *genus*; because it agrees to *horse*, *lion*, *whale*, *butterfly*, which are also common ideas; so *fish*, is a *genus*, because it agrees to *trout*, *herring*, *crab*, which are common natures also.

A *special idea* is called by the schools a *species*; it is one common nature that agrees to several singular individual beings; so *horse* is a *special idea*, or a *species*, because it agrees to *Bucephalus*, *Trott*,  
and



and *Snowball*. *City* is a *special Idea*, for it agrees to *London*, *Paris*, *Bristol*.

*Note 1st.* Some of these *universals* are *genuses*, if compared with less common natures; and they are *species*, if compared with natures more common. So *bird* is a *genus*, if compared with *eagle*, *sparrow*, *raven*, which are also common natures: But it is a *species*, if compared with the more general nature, *animal*. The same may be said of *fish*, *beast*, &c.

This sort of universal ideas, which may either be considered as a *genus*, or a *species*, is called *subaltern*: But the highest *genus*, which is never a *species*, is called the *most general*; and the lowest *species*, which is never a *genus*, is called the *most special*.

It may be observed here also, that that general nature or property wherein two things agrees with most other things, is called its *more remote genus*: So *substance* is the remote genus of *bird*, or *beast*, because it agrees not only to all kinds of animals, but also to things inanimate, as *sun*, *stars*, *clouds*, *metals*, *stones*, *air*, *water*, &c. But *animal* is the *proximate*, or *nearest genus* of *bird*, because it agrees to fewer other things. Those general natures which stand between the *nearest* and *most remote*, are called *intermediate*.

*Note 2d.* In universal ideas it is proper to consider their *comprehension* and their *extension* \*.

The *comprehension* of an idea regards all the essential modes and properties of it: So *body* in its *comprehension* takes in *solidity*, *figure*, *quantity*, *mobility*, &c. So a *bowl* in its *comprehension* includes *roundness*, *volubility*, &c.

The *extension* of an universal idea regards all the particular kinds and single beings that are contained under it. So a *body* in its *extension* includes

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*sun*,

\* *Note.* The word *extension* here is taken in a mere logical sense, and not in a *physical* and *mathematical* sense.

*sun, moon, star, wood, iron, plant, animal, &c.* which are several *species*, or *individuals*, under the general name of *body*. So a *bowl*, in its *extension*, includes a *wooden bowl*, a *brass bowl*, a *white and black bowl*, a *heavy bowl*, &c. and all kinds of bowls, together with all the particular individual bowls in the world.

*Note.* The *comprehension of an idea* is sometimes taken in so large a sense, as not only to include the essential attributes, but all the properties, modes, and relations whatsoever, that belong to any being, as will appear, *Chap. VI.*

This account of *genus* and *species*, is part of that famous doctrine of *universals*, which is taught in the schools, with divers other formalities belonging to it; for it is in this place that they introduce *difference*, which is the primary essential mode, and *property*, or the secondary essential mode, and *accident*, or the accidental mode; and these they call the *five predicables*, because every thing that is affirmed concerning any being must be either the *genus*, the *species*, the *difference*, some *property*, some *accident*: But what farther is necessary to be said concerning these things will be mentioned when we treat of *definition*.

Having finished the doctrine of *universal* and *particular ideas*, I should take notice of another division of them, which also hath respect to their *objects*; and that is, they are either, *real* or *imaginary*.

*Real ideas* are such as have a just foundation in nature, and have real objects, or exemplars, which did, or do, or may actually exist, according to the present state and nature of things; such are all our ideas of *long, broad, swift, slow, wood, iron, men, horses, thoughts, spirits, a cruel master, a proud beggar, a man seven feet high*.

*Imaginary ideas*, which are also called *fantastical*, or *chimerical*, are such as are made by enlarging, diminishing,

diminishing, uniting, dividing real ideas in the mind; in such a manner, as no objects, or exemplars, did or ever will exist, according to the present course of nature, though the several parts of these ideas are borrowed from the real objects; such are the conceptions we have of a *centaur*, a *satyr*, a *golden mountain*, a *flying horse*, a *dog without a head*, a *bull less than a mouse*, or a *mouse as big as a bull*, and a *man twenty feet high*.

Some of these fantastic ideas are *possible*, that is, they are not utterly inconsistent in the nature of things; and therefore it is within the reach of divine power to make such objects; such are most of the instances already given: But *impossibles* carry an utter inconsistency in the ideas which are joined; such are *self-active matter*, and *infinite or eternal men*, a *pious man without honesty*, or *heaven without holiness*.

#### S E C T. IV.

*The division of ideas, with regard to their qualities.*

IDEAS with regard to their *qualities*, afford us these several divisions of them. 1. They are either *clear and distinct*, or *obscure and confused*. 2. They are *vulgar or learned*. 3. They are *perfect or imperfect*. 4. They are *true or false*.

I. Our ideas are either *clear and distinct*, or *obscure and confused*.

Several writers have distinguished the *clear ideas* from those that are *distinct*; and the *confused ideas* from those that are *obscure*; and it must be acknowledged, there may be some difference between them; for it is the *clearness* of ideas for the most part makes them *distinct*; and the *obscurity* of ideas is one thing that will always bring a sort of *confusion* into them. Yet when these writers come to talk largely upon this subject, and to explain and  
adjust

adjust their meaning with great nicety, I have generally found that they not did keep up the distinction they first designed, but they confound the one with the other. I shall therefore treat of *clear* or *distinct ideas*, as one and the same sort, and *obscure* or *confused ideas*, as another.

A *clear* and *distinct idea*, is that which represents the object of the mind with full evidence and strength, and plainly distinguishes it from all other objects whatsoever.

An *obscure* and *confused idea*, represents the object either so faintly, so imperfectly, or so mingled with other ideas, that the object of it doth not appear plain to the mind, nor purely in its own nature, nor sufficiently distinguished from other things.

When we see the sea and sky nearer at hand, we have a *clear* and *distinct idea* of each; but when we look *far* toward the horizon, especially in a misty day, our ideas of both are but *obscure* and *confused*; for we know not which is *sea* and which is *sky*. So when we look at the *colours* of the rainbow, we have a *clear idea* of the *red*, the *blue*, the *green* in the *middle* of their several arches, and a *distinct idea* too, while the eye fixes there; but when we consider the *border* of those colours, they so run into one another that it render their ideas *confused* and *obscure*. So the idea which we have of *our brother*, or *our friend*, whom we see daily, is *clear* and *distinct*; but when the absence of many years has injured the idea, it becomes *obscure* and *confused*.

*Note* here, That some of our ideas may be very *clear* and *distinct* in one respect, and very *obscure* and *confused* in another. So when we speak of a *Chilignonum*, or *figure of a thousand angles*; we may have a *clear* and *distinct rational idea* of the number *one thousand angles*; for we can demonstrate various properties concerning it by reason: But the

*image,*

*image*, or *sensible idea*, which we have of the figure, is but *confused* and *obscure*; for we cannot precisely distinguish it by fancy from the image of a *figure that has nine hundred angles, or nine hundred and ninety*. So when we speak of the *infinite divisibility of matter*, we always keep in our minds a very clear and distinct idea of *division* and *divisibility*; but after we have made a little progress in dividing, and come to parts that are far too small for the reach of our senses, then our *ideas* or *sensible images* of these little bodies, become *obscure* and *indistinct*, and the idea of *infinite* is very *obscure, imperfect* and *confused*.

II. *Ideas* are either *vulgar* or *learned*. A *vulgar idea* represents to us the most obvious and sensible appearances that are contained in the object of them: but a *learned idea* penetrates farther into the nature, properties, reasons, causes and effects of things. This is best illustrated by some examples.

It is a *vulgar idea* that we have of a *rainbow*, when we conceive a large arch in the clouds, made up of various colours parallel to each other: But it is a *learned idea* which a philosopher has, when he considers it as the various reflections and refractions of sun-beams, in drops of falling rain. So it is a *vulgar idea*, which we have of the *colours of solid bodies*, when we perceive them to be, as it were, a red, or blue, or green tincture of the surface of those bodies: But it is a *philosophical idea* when we consider the *various colours* to be nothing else but different sensations excited in us by the variously refracted rays of light, reflected on our eyes in a different manner, according to the different size, or shape, or situation of the particles of which the surfaces of those bodies are composed. It is a *vulgar idea* which we have of a *watch* or *clock*, when we conceive of it as a pretty instrument, made to shew us the hour of the day: But it is a *learned idea* which the watchmaker has of it, who knows  
all



all the several parts of it, the spring, the balance, the chain, the wheels, their axles, &c. together with the various connections and adjustments of each part, whence the exact and uniform motion of the index is derived, which points to the minute or the hour. So when a common understanding reads *Virgil's Æneid*, he has but a *vulgar idea* of that poem, yet his mind is naturally entertained with the story, and his ears with the verse: But when a critic, or a man who has skill in poetry, reads it, he has a *learned idea* of its peculiar beauties, he tastes and relishes a superior pleasure; he admires the Roman Poet, and wishes he had known the Christian Theology, which would have furnished him with nobler materials and machines than all the Heathen Idols.

It is with a *vulgar idea* that the world beholds the *Cartoons* of *Raphael* at Hampton-Court, and every one feels his share of pleasure and entertainment: But a *painter* contemplates the wonders of that Italian pencil, and sees a thousand beauties in them which the vulgar eye neglected: His *learned ideas* give him a transcendent delight, and yet, at the same time, discover the blemishes which the common gazer never observed.

III. *Ideas* are either *perfect* or *imperfect*, which are otherwise called *adequate* or *inadequate*.

Those are *adequate ideas* which perfectly represent their archetypes or objects. *Inadequate ideas* are but a partial, or incomplete representation of those archetypes to which they are referred.

All our *simple ideas* are in some sense *adequate* or *perfect*, because simple ideas, considered merely as our first perceptions, have no parts in them: So we may be said to have a perfect idea of *white*, *black*, *sweet*, *sour*, *length*, *light*, *motion*, *rest*, &c. We have also a perfect idea of various figures, as a *triangle*, a *square*, a *cylinder*, a *cube*, a *sphere*, which are complex ideas: But our idea or image

of

of a *figure of a thousand files*, our idea of the *city of London*, or the *powers of a loadstone*, are very imperfect, as well as all our ideas of *infinite length or breadth*, *infinite power*, *wisdom*, or *duration*; for the idea of *infinite* is endless and ever growing, and can never be completed.

*Note 1.* When we have a *perfect* idea of any thing in all its parts, it is called a *complete idea*; when in all its properties, it is called *comprehensive*. But when we have but an *inadequate* and *imperfect* idea, we are only said to *apprehend* it; therefore we use the term *apprehension* when we speak of our knowledge of God, who can never be *comprehended* by his creatures.

*Note 2.* Though there are a multitude of ideas which may be called *perfect*, or *adequate* in a vulgar sense, yet there are scarce any ideas which are *adequate*, *comprehensive*, and *complete* in a philosophical sense; for there is scarce any thing in the world that we know, as to all the parts and powers and properties of it, in perfection. Even so plain an idea as that of a *triangle* has, perhaps, infinite properties belonging to it, of which we know but a few. Who can tell what are the shapes and positions of those particles, which cause all the variety of colours that appear on the surface of things? Who knows what are the figures of the little corpuscles that compose and distinguish different bodies? The ideas of *brass*, *iron*, *gold*, *wood*, *stone*, *hyssop*, and *rosemary*, have an infinite variety of hidden mysteries contained in the shape, size, motion and position of the little particles of which they are composed; and, perhaps, also infinite unknown properties and powers, that may be derived from them. And if we arise to the *animal* world, or the world of *spirits*, our knowledge of them must be amazingly imperfect, when there is not the least *grain of sand*, or *empty space*, but has too many questions and difficulties belonging to it for  
the

the wisest philosopher upon earth to answer and resolve.

IV. Our *ideas* are either *true* or *false*; for an idea being the representation of a thing in the mind, it must either be a *true* or a *false representation* of it. If the idea be conformable to the object or archetype of it, it is a *true idea*; if not, it is a *false* one. Sometimes our ideas are referred to things really existing without us, as their archetypes. If I see bodies in *their proper colours*, I have a *true idea*: But when a man under the jaundice sees *all bodies yellow*, he has a *false idea* of them. So if we see the *sun* or *moon rising* or *setting*, our idea represents them *bigger* than when they are *on the meridian*: And in this sense it is a *false idea*, because those heavenly bodies are all day and all night of the same bigness. Or when I see a *straight staff appear crooked* while it is half under the water, I say, the water gives me a *false idea* of it. Sometimes our ideas refer to the ideas of other men, denoted by such a particular word, as their archetypes: So when I hear a *Protestant* use the words *church* and *sacraments*, if I understand by these words a *congregation of faithful men who profess Christianity*, and the two *ordinances*, baptism and the Lord's supper, I have a *true idea* of those words in the common sense of Protestants: But if the man who speaks of them be a *Papist*, he means the *church of Rome* and the *seven sacraments*, and then I have a *mistaken idea* of those words, as spoken by him, for he has a different sense and meaning: And in general whensoever I mistake the sense of any speaker or writer, I may be said to have a *false idea* of it.

Some think that *truth* or *falsehood* properly belongs only to *propositions*, which shall be the subject of discourse in the second part of *logick*; for if we consider *ideas* as mere impressions upon the mind, made by outward objects, those impressions will

will ever be conformable to the laws of nature in such a case: The *water* will make a *stick* appear *crooked*, and the *horizontal air* will make the *sun* and *moon* appear *bigger*. And generally where there is *falsehood* in *ideas*, there seems to be some *secret* or *latent proposition*, whereby we judge *falsely* of things. This is more obvious where we take up the words of a writer or speaker in a mistaken sense, for we join his words to our own ideas, which are different from his. But after all, since ideas are pictures of things, it can never be very improper to pronounce them to be *true* or *false*, according to their conformity or nonconformity to their exemplars.

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## CHAP. IV.

*Of Words, and their several Divisions, together with the Advantage and Danger of them.*

### SECT. I.

*Of Words in general, and their Use.*

**T**HOUGH our ideas are first acquired by the perception of objects, or by various *sensations* and *reflections*, yet we convey them to each other by the means of certain sounds, or written marks, which we call *words*; and a great part of our knowledge is both obtained and communicated by these means, which are called *speech* or *language*.

But as we are led into the knowledge of things by *words*, so we are oftentimes led into error or mistake by the use or abuse of *words* also. And in order to guard against such mistakes, as well as

to promote our improvement in knowledge, it is necessary to acquaint ourselves a little with *words* and *terms*. We shall begin with these observations.

*Observation 1.* Words (whether they are spoken or written) have no natural connection with the ideas they are designed to signify, nor with the things which are represented in those ideas. There is no manner of affinity between the sounds *white* in English, or *blanc* in French, and *that colour* which we call by that name; nor have the letters, of which these words are composed, any natural aptness to signify that colour rather than *red* or *green*. Words and names therefore are mere *arbitrary signs* invented by men to communicate their thoughts or ideas to one another.

*Observ. 2.* If one single word were appointed to express one simple idea, and nothing else, as *white*, *black*, *sweet*, *sour*, *sharp*, *bitter*, *extension*, *duration*, there would be scarce any mistake about them.

But alas! It is a common unhappiness in language, that different *simple ideas* are sometimes expressed by the *same word*; so the words *sweet* and *sharp* are applied both to the objects of hearing and tasting, as we shall see hereafter; and this, perhaps, may be one cause or foundation of obscurity and error arising from words.

*Observ. 3.* In communicating our complex ideas to one another, if we could join as many peculiar and appropriated words together in one sound, as we join simple ideas to make one complex one, we should seldom be in danger of mistaking: When I express the taste of an *apple*, which we call the *bitter sweet*, none can mistake what I mean.

Yet this sort of *composition* would make all language a most tedious and unwieldy thing, since most of our ideas are complex, and many of them have eight or ten simple ideas in them; so that the remedy would be worse than the disease; for what



is now expressed in one short word, as *month*, or *year*, would require two lines to express it. It is necessary, therefore, that *single words* be invented to express *complex ideas*, in order to make language short and useful.

But here is our great infelicity, that when *single words* signify *complex ideas*, one word can never distinctly manifest all the *parts* of a complex idea; and thereby it will often happen, that one man includes *more* or *less* in his idea, than another does, while he affixes the *same* word to it. In this case there will be danger of mistake between them, for they do not mean the *same object*, though they use the *same name*. So if one person or nation, by the word *year*, means twelve months of thirty days each, that is, three hundred and sixty days, another intends a *solar year* of three hundred sixty five days, and a third means a *lunar year*, or, twelve *lunar months*, that is, three hundred fifty four days, there will be a great variation and error in their account of things, unless they are well apprized of each other's meaning beforehand. This is supposed to be the reason, why some ancient histories, and prophecies, and accounts of chronology, are so hard to be adjusted. And this is the true reason of so furious and endless debates on many points in divinity; the words *church*, *worship*, *idolatry*, *repentance*, *faith*, *election*, *merit*, *grace*, and many others which signify very *complex ideas*, are not applied to include just the same simple ideas, and the same number of them, by the various contending parties; thence arise confusion and contest.

*Observ. 4.* Though a *single name* does not certainly manifest to us all the *parts* of a *complex idea*, yet it must be acknowledged, that in many of our *complex ideas*, the single name may point out to us some *chief property* which belongs to the thing that the word signifies; especially when the word or name

is traced up to its original, through several languages from whence it is borrowed. So an *apostle* signifies *one who is sent forth*.

But this tracing of a word to its original, (which is called *etymology*) is sometimes a very precarious and uncertain thing: And after all, we have made but little progress towards the attainment of the full meaning of a *complex idea*, by knowing some one chief property of it. We know but a small part of the notion of an *apostle*, by knowing barely that he is *sent forth*.

*Observ. 5.* Many (if not most) of our words which are applied to *moral* and *intellectual ideas*, when traced up to their original in the learned languages, will be found to signify *sensible* and *corporeal* things. Thus the words *apprehension*, *understanding*, *abstraction*, *invention*, *idea*, *inference*, *prudence*, *religion*, *church*, *adoration*, &c. have all a corporeal signification in their original. The name *spirit* itself signifies *breath* or *air*, in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew: Such is the poverty of all languages, they are forced to use these names for *incorporeal* ideas, which thing has a tendency to error and confusion.

*Observ. 6.* The last thing I shall mention that leads us into many a mistake is, the multitude of objects that one name sometimes signifies: There is almost an infinite variety of things and ideas both simple and complex, beyond all the words that are invented in any language; thence it becomes almost necessary that one name should signify several things. Let us but consider the two colours of *yellow* and *blue*, if they are mingled together in any considerable proportion they make a *green*: Now there may be infinite differences of the proportions in the mixture of *yellow* and *blue*; and yet we have only these three words, *yellow*, *blue* and *green*, to signify all of them, at least by one single term.

When I use the word *shore*, I may intend thereby

a coast of land near the sea, or a drain to carry off water, or a prop to support a building; and by the sound of the word *porter*, who can tell whether I mean a man who bears burdens, or a servant who waits at a nobleman's gate? The world is fruitful in the invention of *utenfils* of life, and new *characters* and *offices* of men, yet *names* intirely new are seldom invented; therefore old names are almost necessarily used to signify new things, which may occasion much confusion and error in the receiving and communicating of knowledge.

Give me leave to propose one single instance, wherein all these notes shall be remarkably exemplified. It is the word *bishop*, which in French is called *evêque*; upon which I would make these several observations. 1. That there is no natural connection between the sacred office hereby signified, and the letters or sounds which signify this office; for both these words, *evêque* and *bishop*, signify the same office, though there is not one letter alike in them; nor have the letters which compose the English or the French word any thing sacred belonging to them, more than the letters that compose the words *king* or *soldier*. 2. If the meaning of a word could be learned by its derivation or etymology, yet the original derivation of words is oftentimes very dark and unsearchable; for who would imagine that each of these words are derived from the Latin *episcopus*, or the Greek *ἐπισκοπος*. Yet in this instance we happen to know certainly the true derivation; the French being antiently writ *evesque*, is borrowed from the first part of the Latin word; and the old English *biscop* from the middle of it. 3. The original Greek word signifies an *overlooker*, or one who stands higher than his fellows, and overlooks them: It is a compound word, that primarily signifies *sensible ideas*, translated to signify or include several *moral* or *intellectual ideas*; therefore all will grant that the

nature of the office can never be known by the mere sound or sense of the word *overlooker*. 4. I add farther, the word *bishop* or *episcopus*, even when it is thus translated from a sensible idea, to include several intellectual ideas, may yet equally signify an *overseer* of the poor; an *inspector* of the customs; a *surveyor* of the highways; a *supervisor* of the excise, &c. But by the consent of men, and the language of scripture, it is appropriated to signify a *sacred office in the church*. 5. This very idea and name, thus translated from things sensible, to signify a spiritual and sacred thing, contains but one property of it, namely, *one that has the oversight, or care over others*: But does not tell us whether it includes a *care over one church or many*; over the *laity*, or the *clergy*. 6. Thence it follows, that those who in the complex idea of the word *bishop* include an oversight over *the clergy*, or over a *whole diocese* of people, a *superiority* to presbyters, a distinct *power* of ordination, &c. must necessarily disagree with those who include in it only the care of a single congregation. Thus according to the various opinions of men, this word signifies a *pope*, a *Gallican bishop*, a *Lutheran superintendent*, an *English prelate*, a *pastor of a single assembly*, or a *presbyter or elder*. Thus they quarrel with each other perpetually; and it is well if any of them all have hit precisely the sense of the sacred writers, and included just the same ideas in it, and no others.

I might make all the same remarks on the word *church* or *kirk*, which is derived from *Κυριακὸς οἶκος*, or *the house of the Lord*, contracted into *Kyrioick*. which some suppose to signify *an assembly of Christians*, some take it for *all the world that profess Christianity*, and some make it to mean only *the clergy*; and on these accounts it has been the occasion of as many and as furious controversies as the word *bishop* which was mentioned before.

S E C T.

## S E C T. II.

*Of negative and positive Terms.*

FROM these and other considerations it will follow, that if we would avoid error in our pursuit of knowledge, we must take good heed to the use of *words and terms*, and be acquainted with the various kinds of them.

I. Terms are either *positive* or *negative*.

*Negative* terms are such as have a little word or syllable of denying joined to them, according to the various idioms of every language; as *unpleasant, imprudent, immortal, irregular, ignorant, infinite, endless, lifeless, deathless, nonsense, abyss, anonymous*, where the propositions *un, im, in, non, a, an*, and the termination *less*, signify a negation, either in English, Latin or Greek.

*Positive* terms are those which have no such negative appendices belonging to them, as *life, death, end, sense, mortal*.

But so unhappily are our words and ideas linked together, that we can never know which are *positive ideas*, and which are *negative*, by the word that is used to express them, and that for these reasons.

1<sup>st</sup>, There are some *positive terms* which are made to signify a *negative idea*; as *dead* is properly a thing that is deprived of *life*; *blind* implies a negation or privation of *sight*; *deaf* a want of *hearing*; *dumb* a denial of *speech*.

2<sup>dly</sup>, There are also some *negative terms* which imply *positive ideas*, such as *immortal* and *deathless*, which signify *ever-living*, or a continuance in life: *Insolent*, signifies rude and haughty; *indemnify*, to keep safe; and *infinite*, perhaps has a *positive idea* too, for it is an idea ever growing; and when it is applied to *God*, it signifies his *complete perfection*.

3<sup>dly</sup>,



3dly, There are both *positive* and *negative* terms, invented to signify the *same*, instead of *contrary* ideas; as *unhappy* and *miserable*, *sinless* and *holy*, *pure* and *undefiled*, *impure* and *filthy*, *unkind* and *cruel*, *irreligious* and *profane*, *unforgiving* and *vengeful*, &c. and there is a great deal of beauty and convenience derived to any language from this variety of expression; though sometimes it a little confounds our conceptions of *being* and *not-being*, our *positive* and *negative* ideas.

4thly, I may add also, that there are some words which are *negative* in their *original* language, but seem *positive* to an Englishman, because the negation is unknown; as *abyss*, a place without a bottom; *anodyne*, an easing medicine; *amnesty*, an unremembrance, or general pardon; *anarchy*, a state without government; *anonymous*, that is, nameless; *inept*, that is, not fit; *iniquity*, that is, unrighteousness; *infant*, one that cannot speak, namely, a child; *injurious*, not doing justice or right.

The way therefore to know whether any idea be *negative* or not, is to consider whether it primarily implies the absence of any positive being or mode of being; if it doth, then it is a *negation*, or *negative idea*; otherwise it is a *positive* one, whether the word that it expresses it be positive or negative. Yet after all, in many cases this is very hard to determine, as in *amnesty*, *infinite*, *abyss*, which are originally relative terms, but they signify *pardon*, &c. which seem to be positives. So *darkness*, *madness*, *clown*, are positive terms, but they imply the want of *light*, the want of *reason*, and the want of *manners*; and perhaps these may be ranked among the *negative* ideas.

Here *note*, That in the English tongue *two negative* terms are equal to *one positive*, and signify the same thing, as *not unhappy*, signifies *happy*; *not immortal*, signifies *mortal*; he is *no imprudent man*, that is, he is a *man of prudence*: But the sense and force of the word.

words in such a negative way of expression, seem to be a little diminished.

### S E C T. III.

#### *Of simple and complex Terms.*

II. *TERMS* are divided into *simple* or *complex*. A *simple term* is one word, a *complex term* is when more words are used to signify one thing.

Some terms are *complex in words, but not in sense*, such is the *second emperor of Rome*; for it excites in our mind only the idea of one man, namely, *Augustus*.

Some terms are *complex in sense but not in words*; so when I say an *army*, a *forest*, I mean a *multitude of men or trees*; and almost all our *moral ideas*, as well as many of our *natural ones*, are expressed in this manner; *Religion, piety, loyalty, knavery, theft*, include a variety of ideas in each term.

There are other terms which are *complex both in words and sense*; so when I say, a *fierce dog* or a *pious man*, it excites an idea, not only of those two creatures, but of their peculiar characters also.

Among the terms that are *complex in sense but not in words*, we may reckon those simple terms which contain a *primary* and a *secondary* idea in them; as when I hear my neighbour speak that which is not true, and I say to him, *This is not true*, or *this is false*, I only convey to him the naked idea of his error; this is the *primary idea*: But if I say *it is a lie*, the word *lie* carries also a *secondary idea* in it, for it implies both the falshood of the speech, and my reproach and censure of the speaker. On the other hand, if I say *it is a mistake*, this carries also a *secondary idea* with it; for it not only refers to the falshood of his speech, but includes my tenderness and civility to him at the same time. Another instance may be this; when I use the word *incest, adultery,*

tery, and murder, I convey to another not only the *primary idea* of those actions, but I include also the *secondary idea* of their unlawfulness, and my abhorrence of them.

*Note 1st*, Hence it comes to pass, that among words which signify the same *principal ideas*, some are *clean* and *decent*, others *unclean*; some *chaste*, others *obscene*; some are *kind*, others are *affronting* and *reproachful*, because of the *secondary idea* which custom has affixed to them. And it is the part of a wise man, when there is a necessity of expressing any *evil actions*, to do it either by a word that has a secondary idea of *kindness* or *softness*; or a word that carries in it an idea of *rebuke* and *severity*, according as the case requires: So when there is a necessity of expressing things *unclean* or *obscene*, a wise man will do it in the most decent language, to excite as few uncleanly ideas as possible in the minds of the hearers.

*Note 2d*, In length of time, and by the power of custom, words sometimes change their *primary ideas*, as shall be declared, and sometimes they have changed their *secondary ideas*, though the *primary ideas* may remain: So words that were once *chaste*, by frequent use grow *obscene* and *uncleanly*; and words that were once *honourable* may, in the next generation, grow *mean* and *contemptible*. So the word *dame* originally signified a mistress of a family, who was a *lady*, and it is used still in the *English* law to signify a *lady*; but in common use now a-days it represents a *farmer's wife*, or a *mistress of a family of the lower rank in the country*. So those words of *Rabshakeh*, Isa. xxxvi. 12. in our translation, (*eat their own dung, &c.*) were doubtless decent and clean language, when our translators wrote them, above a hundred years ago. The word *dung* has maintained its old secondary idea and inoffensive sense, to this day; but the *other word* in that sentence has by custom acquired a more uncleanly

cleanly idea, and should now rather be changed into a more decent term, and so it should be read in public, unless it should be thought more proper to omit the sentence \*.

For this reason it is that the Jewish Rabbins have supplied other chaste words in the margin of the Hebrew Bible, where the words of the text, through time and custom, are degenerated, so as to carry any base and *unclean secondary idea* in them; and they read the word which is in the margin, which they call *keri*, and not that which was written in the text, which they call *chetib*.

## S E C T. IV.

*Of Words common and proper.*

III. *WORDS* and *names* are either *common* or *proper*. *Common names* are such as stand for universal ideas, or a whole rank of beings, whether general or special. These are called *appellatives*; so *fish*, *bird*, *man*, *city*, *river*, are common names; and so are *trout*, *eel*, *lobster*, for they all agree to many *individuals*, and some of them to many *Species*: But *Cicero*, *Virgil*, *Bucephalus*, *London*, *Rome*, *Ætna*, the *Thames* are proper names, for each of them agrees only to one *single being*.

*Note* here, *first*, That a *proper name* may become in some sense *common*, when it hath been given to several beings of the same kind; so *Cæsar*, which was the proper name of the first emperor, *Julius*, became also a common name to all the following emperors. And *tea*, which was the proper name of one sort of *Indian leaf*, is now-a-days become a common name for many infusions of herbs, or plants,

\* So in some places of the sacred historians, where it is written, *Every one that pisseth against the wall*, we should read, *every male*.

plants, in water; as *sage-tea*, *alehoof-tea*, *limon-tea*, &c. So *Peter*, *Thomas*, *John*, *William*, may be reckoned common names also, because they are given to many persons, unless they are determined to signify a single person at any particular time or place.

*Note* in the *second* place, That a *common* name may become *proper* by custom, or by the time, or place, or persons that use it; as in Great Britain, when we say *the king*, we mean our present rightful sovereign *King GEORGE*, who now reigns; when we speak of *the prince*, we intend his royal highness *GEORGE Prince of Wales*: If we mention the *city*, when we are near *London*, we generally mean the *city of London*; when in a country town, we say *the parson*, or the *esquire*, all the parish knows who are the single persons intended by it; so when we are speaking of the history of the New Testament, and use the words *Peter*, *Paul*, *John*, we mean those three apostles.

*Note* in the *third* place, That any *common* name whatsoever is made *proper*, by terms of particularity added to it, as the common words *pope*, *king*, *horse*, *garden*, *book*, *knife*, &c. are designed to signify a singular idea, when we say the *present pope*; *the king of Great Britain*; *the horse that won the last plate at Newmarket*; *the royal garden at Kensington*; *this book*, *that knife*, &c.

## S E C T. V.

*Of concrete and abstract Terms.*

IV. *WORDS* or *terms* are divided into *abstract* and *concrete*.

*Abstract* terms signify the mode or quality of a being, without any regard to the subject in which it is; as *whiteness*, *roundness*, *length*, *breadth*, *wisdom*, *mortality*, *life*, *death*.

*Concrete*



*Concrete* terms, while they express the quality, do also either express or imply, or refer to some subject to which it belongs; as *white, round, long, broad, wise, mortal, living, dead*. But these are not always noun adjectives in a grammatical sense; for a *fool, a knave, a philosopher*, and many other concretes, are *substantives*, as well as *knavery, folly, and philosophy*, which are the *abstract* terms that belong to them.

## S E C T. VI.

*Of univocal and equivocal Words.*

V. *WORDS* and *terms* are either *univocal* or *equivocal*. *Univocal* words are such as signify but one idea; or at least but one sort of thing; *equivocal* words are such as signify two or more different ideas, or different sorts of objects. The words *book, bible, fish, house, elephant*, may be called *univocal* words; for I know not that they signify any thing else but those ideas to which they are generally affixed; but *head* is an *equivocal* word, for it signifies the head of a *nail*, or of a *pin*, as well as of an *animal*: *Nail* is an *equivocal* word, it is used for the *nail of the hand, or foot*, and for an *iron nail* to fasten any thing. *Post* is *equivocal*, it is a *piece of timber*, or a *swift messenger*. A *church* is a *religious assembly*, or the *large fair building* where they meet; and sometimes the same word means a *synod of bishops*, or of *presbyters*, and in some places it is the *pope and a general council*.

Here let it be noted, that when two or more words signify the same thing, as *wave* and *billow*, *mead* and *meadow*, they are usually called *synonymous* words: But it seems very strange, that words, which are directly contrary to each other, should sometimes represent almost the same ideas; yet thus it is in some few instances; a *valuable*, or an *inva-*

*luable blessing; a shameful, or a shameless villain; a thick skull, or a thin skull'd fellow, a mere paper skull; a man of a large conscience, little conscience, or no conscience; a famous rascal, or an infamous one. So uncertain a thing is human language, whose foundation and support is custom!*

As words signifying the same thing are called *synonymous*, so equivocal words, or those which signify several things, are called *homonymous*, or *ambiguous*; and when persons use such ambiguous words, with a design to deceive, it is called *equivocation*.

Our *simple ideas*, and especially the *sensible qualities*, furnish us with a great variety of *equivocal* or *ambiguous words*; for these being the first, and most natural ideas we have, we borrow some of their names, to signify many other ideas, both simple and complex. The word *sweet* expresses the pleasant perceptions of almost every sense; *sugar* is sweet, but it hath not the same sweetness as *musick*; nor hath *musick* the sweetness of a *rose*; and a *sweet prospect* differs from them all: Nor yet have any of these the same sweetness as *discourse*, *counsel*, or *meditation* hath; yet the royal Psalmist saith of a man, *We took sweet counsel together*; and of God, *My meditation of him shall be sweet*. *Bitter* is also such an equivocal word; there is *bitter wormwood*, there are *bitter words*, there are *bitter enemies*, and a *bitter cold morning*. So there is a sharpness in *vinegar*, and there is a sharpness in *pain*, in *sorrow*, and in *reproach*; there is a *sharp eye*, a *sharp wit*, and a *sharp sword*: But there is not one of these seven *sharpnesses* the same as another of them, and a *sharp east wind* is different from them all.

There are also *verbs*, or words of action, which are equivocal, as well as *nouns* or *names*: The words to *bear*, to *take*, to *come*, to *get*, are sufficient instances of it; as when we say, to *bear a burden*, to *bear sorrow* or *reproach*, to *bear a name*, to  
bear

bear a *grudge*, to bear *fruit*, or to bear *children*; the word *bear* is used in very different senses: And so is the word *get*, when we say, to get *money*, to get *in*, to get *off*, to get *ready*, to get a *stomach*, and to get a *cold*, &c.

There is also a great deal of ambiguity in many of the English particles; as, *but*, *before*, *beside*, *with*, *without*, *that*, *then*, *there*, *for*, *forth*, *above*, *about*, &c. of which grammars and dictionaries will sufficiently inform us.

## S E C T. VII.

### *Various Kinds of equivocal Words.*

**I**T would be endless to run through all the varieties of words and terms, which have different senses applied to them; I shall only mention therefore a few of the most remarkable and most useful distinctions among them.

*1st*, The first division of equivocal words lets us know that some are equivocal *only in their sound* or *pronunciation*; others are equivocal *only in writing*; and others, *both in writing and in sound*.

Words equivocal in *sound only*, are such as these; the *rein* of a bridle, which hath the same sound with the *reign* of a king, or a shower of *rain*; but all three have different letters, and distinct spelling. So *might*, or strength, is equivocal in sound, but differs in writing from *mite*, a little animal, or a small piece of money. And the verb *to write*, has the same sound with *wright* a workman, *right* or equity, and *rite* or ceremony; but it is spelled very differently in them all.

Words equivocal in *writing only*, are such as these; to *tear* to pieces, has the same spelling with a *tear*: To *lead*, or guide, has the same letters as *lead*, the metal: And a *bowl* for recreation, is written the

same way as a *bowl* for drinking; but the pronunciation for all these is different.

But those words which are most commonly and justly called *equivocal*, are such as are both written and pronounced the same way, and yet have different senses or ideas belonging to them; such are all the instances which were given in the preceding section.

Among the words which are equivocal in *sound only*, and *not in writing*, there is a large field for persons who delight in jests and puns, in riddles and quibbles, to sport themselves. This sort of words is also used by wanton persons to convey *lewd ideas*, under the covert of expressions capable of a *chaste* meaning, which are called *double entendres*; or when persons speak *falsehood* with a design to deceive, under the covert of *truth*. Though it must be confessed, that all sorts of equivocal words yield sufficient matter for such purposes.

There are many cases also, wherein an equivocal word is used, for the sake of *decency*, to cover a *foul idea*: For the most chaste and modest, and well-bred persons, having sometimes a necessity to speak of the things of nature, convey their ideas in the most inoffensive language by this means. And indeed, the mere poverty of all languages makes it necessary to use *equivocal words* upon many occasions, as the common writings of men, and even the holy book of God, sufficiently manifest.

2dly, Equivocal words are usually distinguished, according to their *original*, into such, whose various senses arise from *mere chance* or *accident*, and such as are made equivocal by *design*; as the word *bear* signifies a *shaggy beast*, and it signifies also to *bear* or *carry a burden*; this seems to be the mere effect of *chance*: But if I call my dog *bear*, because he is shaggy, or call one of the northern constellations by that name, from a fancied situation of the stars in the shape of that animal, then it  
is

is by *design* that the word is made yet further equivocal.

But because I think this common account of the spring or origin of equivocal words is too slight and imperfect, I shall reserve this subject to be treated of by itself, and proceed to the *third division*.

3dly, Ambiguous, or *equivocal* words, are such as are sometimes taken in a *large and general* sense, and sometimes in a sense *more strict and limited*, and have different ideas affixed to them accordingly. *Religion*, or *virtue*, taken in a large sense, includes both our *duty to God* and *our neighbour*; but in a more strict, limited and proper sense, *virtue* signifies our *duty towards men*, and *religion* our *duty to God*. *Virtue* may yet be taken in the strictest sense, and then it signifies *power or courage*, which is the sense of it in some places of the New Testament. So *grace*, taken in a large sense, means the *favour of God*, and all the spiritual blessings that proceed from it, (which is a frequent sense of it in the Bible) but in a limited sense it signifies *the habit of holiness* wrought in us by divine favour, or a *complex idea of the Christian virtues*. It may also be taken in the strictest sense, and thus it signifies any *single Christian virtue*, as in 2 Cor. viii. 6, 7. where it is used for *liberality*. So a *city*, in a strict and proper sense, means the *houses inclosed within the walls*; in a larger sense, it reaches to all the *suburbs*.

This *larger and stricter* sense of a word is used in almost all the sciences, as well as in theology, and in common life. The word *geography*, taken in a *strict sense*, signifies the knowledge of the circles of the earthly globe, and the situation of the various parts of the earth; when it is taken in a *little larger sense*, it includes the knowledge of the seas also; and in the *largest sense* of all, it extends to the various customs, habits, and governments of nations. When an astronomer uses the word *star* in its pro-



per and strict sense, it is applied only to the *fixed stars*, but in a large sense it includes the *planets* also.

This equivocal sense of words belongs also to many proper names: So *Asia*, taken in the largest sense, is one quarter of the world; in a more limited sense it signifies *Natolia*, or the *Lesser Asia*; but in the strictest sense it means no more than one little province of *Natolia*, where stood the cities of *Ephesus*, *Smyrna*, *Sardis*, &c. And this is the most frequent sense of it in the New Testament. *Flanders* and *Holland*, in a strict sense, are but two single provinces among the seventeen, but in a large sense *Holland* includes seven of them, and *Flanders* ten.

There are also some very common and little words in all languages, that are used in a more *extensive*, or more *limited* sense; such as *all*, *every*, *whatsoever*, &c. When the apostle says, *all men have sinned*, and *all men must die*, *all* is taken in its most universal and extensive sense, including *all mankind*, Rom. v. 12. When he appoints *prayer to be made for all men*, it appears by the following verses, that he restrains the word *all* to signify chiefly *all ranks and degrees of men*, 1 Tim. ii. 1. But when St. Paul says, *I please all men in all things*, 1 Cor. x. 33. The word *all* is exceedingly limited, for it reaches no farther than that he pleased *all* those men *whom he conversed with* in *all* things that were *lawful*.

4thly, Equivocal words are, in the fourth place, distinguished by their *literal* or *figurative* sense. Words are used in a *proper* or *literal* sense, when they are designed to signify those ideas for which they were originally made, or to which they are primarily and generally annexed; but they are used in a *figurative* or *tropical* sense, when they are made to signify some things, which only bear either a *reference* or a *resemblance* to the primary ideas of them.

them. So when two princes contend by their armies, we say they are at *war* in a proper sense; but when we say there is a *war*, betwixt the winds and the waves in a storm, this is called *figurative*, and the peculiar figure is a *metaphor*. So when the scripture says, *Riches make themselves wings, and fly away as an eagle toward heaven*, the *wings* and the *flight* of the eagle are *proper* expressions; but when *flight* and *wings* are applied to *riches*, it is only by way of *figure* and *metaphor*. So when a man is said to *repent*, or *laugh*, or *grieve*, it is literally taken; but when God is said to *be grieved*, to *repent*, or *laugh*, &c. these are all figurative expressions borrowed from a resemblance to mankind. And when the words *Job* or *Esther* are used to signify those very persons, it is the *literal* sense of them; but when they signify those two books of scripture, this is a *figurative* sense. The names of *Horace*, *Juvenal*, and *Milton*, are used in the same manner, either for *books* or *men*.

When a word, which originally signifies any particular idea or object, is attributed to several other objects, not so much by way of *resemblance*, but rather on the account of some evident *reference* or *relation* to the original idea, this is sometimes peculiarly called an *analogical* word; so a *sound* or *healthy pulse*; a *sound digestion*; *sound sleep*; are all so called with *reference* to a *sound* and *healthy* constitution; but if you speak of *sound doctrine*, or *sound speech*, this is by way of *resemblance* to health; and the words are *metaphorical*: Yet many times *analogy* and *metaphor* are used promiscuously in the same sense, and not distinguished.

Here note, That the design of *metaphorical language*, and *figures of speech*, is not merely to represent our *ideas*, but to represent them with vivacity, spirit, affection, and power; and though they often make a deeper impression upon the mind of the hearer, yet they do as often lead him into a mistake,

take, if they are used at improper times and places. Therefore, where the design of the speaker or writer is merely to *explain, instruct*, and to lead into the knowledge of naked truth, he ought for the most part to use *plain* and *proper* words if the language affords them, and not to deal much in *figurative* speech. But this sort of terms is used very profitably by *poets* and *orators*, whose business is to move, and persuade, and work on the passions, as well as on the understanding. Figures are also happily employed in proverbial *moral sayings* by the *wisest* and the *best* of men, to impress them deeper on the memory by *sensible images*; and they are often used for other valuable purposes in the *sacred writings*.

5thly, I might adjoin another *sort of equivocal words*; as there are some which have a different meaning in *common language*, from what they have in the *sciences*; the word *passion* signifies the *receiving any action* in a large philosophical sense; in a more limited philosophical sense, it signifies *any of the affections of human nature*, as *love, fear, joy, sorrow, &c.* But the common people confine it only to *anger*. So the word *simple*, philosophically signifies *single*, but vulgarly it is used for *foolish*.

6thly, Other equivocal words are used sometimes in an *absolute* sense, as when God is called *perfect*; which allows of no defect; and sometimes in a *comparative* sense, as good men are oftentimes called *perfect* in scripture, in comparison of those who are much inferior to them in knowledge or holiness: But I have dwelt rather too long upon this subject already, therefore I add no more.

S E C T. VIII.

*The Origin or Causes of equivocal Words.*

NOW, that we may become more skilful in guarding ourselves and others against the danger of mistakes which may arise from *equivocal* words, it may not be amiss to conclude this chapter with a short account of the various ways or means whereby a word changes its signification, or acquires any new sense, and thus becomes *equivocal*, especially if it keeps its old sense also.

1. *Mere chance* sometimes gives the same word different senses; as the word *light* signifies a *body that is not heavy*; and it also signifies the *effect of sun-beams*, or the *medium whereby we see objects*: This is merely accidental, for there seems to be no connection between these two senses, nor any reason for them.

2. *Error and mistake* is another occasion of giving various senses to the same word; as when different persons read the names of *priest, bishop, church, easter*, &c. in the New Testament, they affix different ideas to them, for want of acquaintance with the true meaning of the sacred writer; though it must be confessed, these various senses, which might arise at first from honest mistake, may be culpably supported and propagated by interest, ambition, prejudice, and a party-spirit on any side.

3. *Time and custom* alters the meaning of words. *Knave* heretofore signified a *diligent servant* (*Gnavus*;) and a *villain* was an *under tenant to the lord of the manour* (*villicus*;) but now both these words carry an idea of wickedness and reproach with them. A *ballad* once signified a solemn and sacred song, as well as one that is trivial, when *Solomon's Song* was called the *Ballad of ballads*: but now it is applied to nothing but trifling verse, or comical subjects.

4. Words change their sense by *figures and metaphors*,

*phors*, which are derived from some *real analogy* or *resemblance* between several things; as when *wings* and *flight* are applied to *riches*, it signifies only, that the owner may as easily lose them, as he would lose a bird who flew away with wings.

And I think, under this head we may rank those words, which signify different ideas, by a sort of an unaccountable far-fetched *analogy*, or distant *resemblance*, that *fancy* has introduced between one thing and another; as when we say, the *meat* is *green*, when it is *half-roasted*: We speak of *airing linen by the fire*, when we mean *drying* or *warming* it: We call for *round coals* for the chimney, when we mean *large square ones*: And we talk of the *wing of a rabbit*, when we mean the *fore-leg*: The true reason of these appellations we leave to the criticks

5. Words also change their sense by the *special occasion* of using them, the *peculiar manner of pronunciation*, the *sound of the voice*, the *motion of the face*, or *gestures of the body*; so when an angry master says to his servant, *it is bravely done!* or *you are a fine gentleman!* he means just the contrary; namely, *it is very ill done*; *you are a sorry fellow*: It is one way of giving a severe reproach, for the words are spoken by way of *farcaſm*, or *irony*.

6. Words are applied to various senses, by *new ideas* appearing or arising faster than *new words* are framed. So when *gunpowder* was found out, the word *powder*, which before signified only *dust*, was made then to signify that *mixture* or *composition of nitre, charcoal, &c.* And the name *canon*, which before signified a *law* or a *rule*, is now also given to a *great gun*, which gives laws to nations. So footboys, who had frequently the common name of *Jack* given them, were kept to turn the spit, or to pull off their master's boots; but when instruments were invented for both these services, they were both called *jacks*, though one was of iron, the other of wood, and very different in their form.

7. Words



7. Words alter their significations according to the *ideas of the various persons, sects, or parties*, who use them, as we have hinted before; so when a *Papist* uses the word *hereticks*, he generally means the *Protestants*; when a *Protestant* uses the word, he means *any persons who were wilfully (and perhaps contentiously) obstinate in fundamental errors*. When a *Jew* speaks of the *true religion*, he means the *institution of Moses*; when a *Turk* mentions it, he intends the *doctrine of Mahomet*; but when a *Christian* makes use of it, he designs to signify *Christianity*, or the *truths and precepts of the gospel*.

8. Words have different significations according to the *book, writing, or discourse* in which they stand. So in a treatise of *anatomy*, a *foot* signifies that *member in the body of a man*: But in a book of *geometry or mensuration*, it signifies *twelve inches*.

If I had room to exemplify most of these particulars in one single word, I know not where to choose a fitter then the word *sound*, which seems, as it were by *chance*, to signify three distinct ideas, namely, *healthy*, (from *sanus*) as a *sound body*; *noise*, (from *sonus*) as a *shrill sound*; and to *sound the sea* (perhaps from the French *sonde*, a probe, or an instrument to find the depth of water.) From these three, which I may call *original senses*, various *derivative senses* arise; as *sound sleep*, *sound lungs*, *sound wind and limb*, a *sound heart*, a *sound mind*, *sound doctrine*, a *sound divine*, *sound reason*, a *sound cask*, *sound timber*, a *sound reproof*, to *beat one soundly*, to *sound one's meaning or inclination*, and a *sound or narrow sea*; turn these all into Latin, and the variety will appear plain.

I confess, some few of these which I have mentioned as the different springs of *equivocal* words, may be reduced in some cases to the same original: But it must also be granted, that there may be other ways besides these whereby a word comes to extend its signification, to include various ideas, and become

come *equivocal*. And though it is the business of a grammarian to pursue these remarks with more variety and particularity, yet it is also the work of a *logician* to give notice of these things, lest darkness, confusion, and perplexity, be brought into our conceptions, by the means of words, and thence our *judgments* and *reasonings* become erroneous.

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## CHAP. V.

### *General Directions relating to our IDEAS.*

Direction I. *F*URNISH yourselves with a rich variety of ideas; acquaint yourselves with things ancient and modern; things natural, civil and religious; things domestic and national; things of your native land, and of foreign countries; things present, past and future; and above all, be well acquainted with God and yourselves; learn animal nature, and the workings of your own spirits.

Such a general acquaintance with things will be of very great advantage.

The *first benefit* of it is this; it will assist the use of *reason* in all its following operations; it will teach you to *judge* of things *aright*, to *argue justly*, and to *methodise* your thoughts with *accuracy*. When you shall find several things akin to each other, and several different from each other, agreeing in some part of their idea, and disagreeing in other parts, you will range your ideas in better order, you will be more easily led into a distinct knowledge of things, and will obtain a rich store of proper thoughts and arguments upon all occasions.

You will tell me, perhaps, That you design the study of the *law* or *divinity*; and what good can *natural philosophy* or *mathematicks* do you, or any other science,

science, not directly subordinate to your chief design? But let it be considered, that all sciences have a sort of mutual connection; and knowledge of all kinds fits the mind to reason and judge better concerning any particular subject. I have known a judge upon the bench betray his ignorance, and appear a little confused in his sentiments about a case of suspected murder brought before him, for want of some acquaintance with *animal nature* and *philosophy*.

Another *benefit* of it is this; such a large and general acquaintance with things will secure you from perpetual *admirations* and *surprises*, and guard you against that weakness of ignorant persons, who have never seen any thing beyond the confines of their own dwelling, and therefore they wonder at almost every thing they see; every thing beyond the smoke of their own chimney, and the reach of their own windows, is new and strange to them.

A *third benefit* of such an universal acquaintance with things, is this; it will keep you from being too *positive* and *dogmatical*, from an excess of *credulity* and *unbelief*, that is, a readiness to believe, or to deny every thing at first hearing; when you shall have often seen, that strange and uncommon things, which often seemed incredible, are found to be true; and things very commonly received as true, have been found false.

The *way of attaining such an extensive treasure of ideas*, is, with diligence to apply yourself to read the best books; converse with the most knowing and the wisest of men; and endeavour to improve by every person in whose company you are; suffer no hour to pass away in a lazy idleness, an impertinent chattering, or useless trifles: Visit other cities and countries when you have seen your own, under the care of one who can teach you to profit by travelling, and to make wise observations; indulge a just curiosity in seeing the wonders of art and nature;

search into things yourselves, as well as learn them from others; be acquainted with men as well as books; learn all things as much as you can at first hand; and let as many of your ideas as possible be the representations of things, and not merely the representations of other mens ideas: Thus your soul, like some noble building, shall be richly furnished with original paintings, and not with mere copies.

Direct. II. *Use the most proper methods to retain that treasure of ideas which you have acquired*; for the mind is ready to let many of them slip, unless some pains and labour be taken to fix them upon the memory.

And more especially let those ideas be laid up and preserved with the greatest care, which are most directly suited, either to your *eternal welfare*, as a *Christian*, or to your particular *station and profession* in this life; for though the former rule recommends an universal acquaintance with things, yet it is but a more general and superficial knowledge that is required or expected of any man, in things which are utterly foreign to his own business: But it is necessary you should have a more particular and accurate acquaintance with those things that refer to your peculiar province and duty in this life, or your happiness in another.

There are some persons who never arrive at any deep, solid, or valuable knowledge in any science, or any business of life, because they are perpetually fluttering over the surface of things in a curious and wandering search of infinite variety; ever hearing, reading, or asking after something new, but impatient of any labour to lay up and preserve the ideas they have gained: Their souls may be compared to a looking-glass, that wheresoever you turn it, it receives the images of all objects, but retains none.

In order to preserve your treasure of ideas, and  
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the knowledge you have gained, pursue the following advices, especially in your younger years.

1. *Recollect every day the things you have seen, or heard, or read*, which may have made any addition to your understanding: Read the writings of God and men with diligence and perpetual reviews: Be not fond of hastening to a new book, or a new chapter, till you have well fixed and established in your minds what was useful in the last: Make use of your memory in this manner, and you will sensibly experience a gradual improvement of it, while you take care not to load it to excess.

2. *Talk over the things which you have seen, heard, or learnt, with some proper acquaintance*: This will make a fresh impression on your memory; and if you have no fellow-student at hand, none of equal rank with yourselves, tell it over to any of your acquaintance, where you can do it with propriety and decency; and whether they learn any thing by it or no, your own repetition of it will be an improvement to yourself: And this practice also will furnish you with a variety of words, and copious language, to express your thoughts upon all occasions.

3. Commit to writing some of the most considerable improvements which you daily make, at least such hints as may recal them again to your mind, when perhaps they are vanished and lost. And here I think Mr *Locke's* method of *adversaria*, or *common-places*, which he describes in the end of the first volume of his *posthumous works*, is the best; using no learned method at all, setting down things as they occur, leaving a distinct page for each subject, and making an index to the pages.

At the end of every week, or month, or year, you may review your remarks for these reasons: *First, To judge of your own improvement*; when you shall find that many of your younger collections are either weak and trifling; or if they are just and proper, yet they are grown now so familiar to you, that



you will thereby see your own advancement in knowledge. And in the next place, what remarks you find there worthy of your riper observation, you may *note them with a marginal star*, instead of transcribing them, as being worthy of your second year's review, when the others are neglected.

To shorten something of this labour, if the books which you read are your own, mark with a pen, or pencil, the most considerable things in them which you desire to remember. Thus you may read that book the second time over with half the trouble, by your eye running over the paragraphs which your pencil has noted. It is but a very weak objection against this practice to say, *I shall spoil my book*; for I persuade myself, that you did not buy it as a *bookseller*, to sell it again for gain, but as a *scholar*, to improve your mind by it; and if the mind be improved, your advantage is abundant, though your book yields less money to your executors\*.

Direct. III. *As you proceed both in learning and in life, make a wise observation what are the ideas, what the discourses and the parts of knowledge that have been more or less useful to yourself or others.* In our younger years, while we are furnishing our minds with a treasure of ideas, our experience is but small, and our judgment weak; it is therefore impossible at that age to determine aright concerning the real *advantage* and *usefulness* of many things we learn. But when age and experience have matured your judgment,

\* *Note*, This advice of *writing, marking, and reviewing* your marks, refers chiefly to those *occasional notions* you meet with either in reading or conversation: But when you are *directly* and *professedly* pursuing any subject of knowledge in a good system in your younger years, the *system* itself is your *common-place-book*, and must be entirely reviewed. The same may be said concerning any *treatise* which closely, succinctly, and accurately handles any particular theme.

ment, then you will gradually drop the more *useless* part of your younger furniture, and be more solicitous to retain that which is most necessary for your welfare in this life, or a better. Hereby you will come to make the same complaint that almost every learned man has done after long experience in study, and in the affairs of human life and religion: *Alas! how many hours, and days, and months, have I lost in pursuing some parts of learning, and in reading some authors, which have turned to no other account, but to inform me that they were not worth my labour and pursuit!* Happy the man who has a wise tutor to conduct him through all the sciences in the first years of his study; and who has a prudent friend always at hand to point out to him, from experience, how much of every science is worth his pursuit! And happy the student that is so wise as to follow such advice!

Direct. IV. *Learn to acquire a government over your ideas and your thoughts, that they may come when they are called, and depart when they are bidden.* There are some thoughts that rise and intrude upon us while we shun them; there are others that fly from us, when we would hold and fix them.

If the *ideas* which you would willingly make the matter of present meditation *are ready to fly from you*, you must be obstinate in the pursuit of them by an habit of fixed meditation; you must keep your soul to the work, when it is ready to start aside every moment, unless you will abandon yourself to be a slave to every wild imagination. It is a common, but it is an unhappy and a shameful thing, that every trifle that comes across the senses or fancy should divert us, that a buzzing fly should tease our spirits, and scatter our best ideas: But we must learn to be deaf to, and regardless of other things, besides that which we make the present subject of our meditation: And in order to help a wandering and fickle humour, it

is proper to have a book or paper in our hands, which has some proper hints of the subject we design to pursue. We must be resolute and laborious, and sometimes conflict with ourselves, if we would be wise and learned.

Yet I would not be too severe in this *rule*: It must be confessed, there are *seasons* when the mind, or rather the brain, is *over-tired* or *jaded* with study and thinking; or upon some other accounts animal nature may be *languid* or *cloudy*, and unfit to assist the spirit in meditation; at such seasons (provided that they return not too often) it is better sometimes to yield to the present indisposition; for if nature intirely resist, nothing can be done to the purpose, at least in that subject or science. Then you may think it proper to give yourself up to some hours of *leisure* and *recreation*, or *useful idleness*; or if not, then turn your thoughts to some *other alluring subject*, and pore no longer upon the *first*, till some brighter or more favourable moments arise. A student shall do more in one hour, when all things concur to invite him to any special study, than in four hours, at a dull and improper season.

I would also give the same advice, if some *vain*, or *worthless*, or *foolish idea*, will croud itself into your thoughts; and if you find that all your labour and wrestling cannot defend yourself from it, then divert the importunity of that which offends you by turning your thoughts to some entertaining subject, that may amuse you a little, and draw you off from the troublesome and imposing guest; and many a time also in such a case, when the impertinent and the intruding ideas would divert from present duty, *devotion* and *prayer* have been very successful to overcome such obstinate troublers of the peace and profit of the soul.

If the natural genius and temper be too *volatile*, *fickle*, and *wandering*, such persons ought in a more special manner to apply themselves to *mathematical learning*.

*learning*, and to begin their studies with *arithmetick* and *geometry*; wherein new truths continually arising to the mind, out of the plainest and easiest principles, will allure the thoughts with incredible pleasure in the pursuit: This will give the student such a delightful taste of reasoning, as will fix his attention to the single subject which he pursues, and by degrees will cure the habitual levity of his spirit: But let him not indulge and pursue these so far, as to neglect the prime studies of his designed profession.

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## C H A P. VI.

*Special Rules to direct our Conceptions of Things.*

A Great part of what has been already written, is designed to lay a foundation for those *rules* which may guide and regulate our conceptions of things; this is our main business and design in the *first part of logick*. Now if we can but direct our thoughts to a just and happy manner in *forming* our ideas of things, the other operations of the mind will not so easily be perverted; because most of our errors in *judgment*, and the weakness, fallacy and mistakes of our *argumentation*, proceed from the darkness, confusion, defect, or some other irregularity in our conceptions.

The rules to assist and direct our conceptions are these:

1. Conceive of things *clearly and distinctly* in their *own natures*.
2. Conceive of things *completely* in all their *parts*.
3. Conceive of things *comprehensively* in all their *properties and relations*.
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4. Conceive of things *extensively* in all their *kinds*.
5. Conceive of things *orderly*, or in a proper *method*.

## S E C T. I.

*Of gaining clear and distinct IDEAS.*

THE first rule is this, *Seek after a clear and distinct conception of things as they are in their own nature, and do not content yourselves with obscure and confused ideas, where clearer are to be attained.*

There are some things indeed whereof distinct ideas are scarce attainable, they seem to surpass the capacity of the understanding in our present state; such are the notions of *eternal, immense, infinite*, whether this *infinity* be applied to *number*, as an infinite multitude; to *quantity*, as infinite length, or breadth; to *powers and perfections*, as strength, wisdom, or goodness, infinite, &c. Though mathematicians in their way demonstrate several things in the doctrine of *infinities*, yet there are still some insolvable difficulties, that attend the ideas of *infinity*, when it is applied to mind or body; and while it is in reality but *an idea ever growing*, we cannot have so clear and distinct a conception of it as to secure us from mistakes in some of our reasonings about it.

There are many other things that belong to the material world, wherein the sharpest philosophers have never yet arrived at clear and distinct ideas; such as the particular *shape, situation, contexture, and motion of the small particles of minerals, metals, plants, &c.* whereby their very natures and essences are distinguished from each other. Nor have we either senses or instruments sufficiently nice and accurate to find them out. There are other things in the world of spirits wherein our ideas are very dark and confused, such as their *union with animal nature,*



*nature, the way of their acting on material beings, and their converse with each other.* And though it is a laudable ambition to search what may be known of these matters, yet it is a vast hindrance to the enrichment of our understandings, if we spend too much of our time and pains among *infinites* and *unsearchables*, and those things for the investigation whereof we are not furnished with proper faculties in the present state. It is therefore of great service to the true improvement of the mind, to distinguish well between *knowables* and *unknowables*.

As far as things are *knowable* by us, it is of excellent use to accustom ourselves to *clear and distinct ideas*. Now among many other occasions of the darkness and mistakes of our minds, there are these two things which most remarkably bring *confusion* into our *ideas*.

1. That from our infancy we have had the ideas of things so far connected with the *ideas of words*, that we often mistake words for things, we mingle and confound one with the other.

2. From our youngest years we have been ever ready to consider things not so much in their own natures, as in their *various respects* to ourselves, and chiefly to our *senses*; and we have also joined and mingled the ideas of *some things*, with many *other ideas*, to which they were not akin in their own natures.

In order therefore to a *clear and distinct* knowledge of things, we must unclothe them of all these *relations* and *mixtures*, that we may contemplate them naked, and in *their own natures*, and distinguish the subject that we have in view from all other subjects whatsoever: Now to perform this well, we must here consider the *definition of words*, and the *definition of things*.

## S E C T. II.

*Of the Definition of Words or Names.*

**I**F we could conceive of things as angels and unbodied spirits do, without involving them in those clouds which words and language throw upon them, we should seldom be in danger of such mistakes as are perpetually committed by us in the present state; and indeed it would be of unknown advantage to us to accustom ourselves to *form ideas of things without words*, that we might know them in their *own proper natures*. But since we must use words, both to learn and to communicate most of our notions, we should do it with just rules of caution. I have already declared in part, how often and by what means our words become the occasion of errors in our conceptions of things. To remedy such inconveniences, we must get an exact *definition of the words* we make use of, that is, we must determine precisely the sense of our words, which is called the *definition of the name*.

Now a *definition of the name* being only a declaration in what sense the word is used, or what idea or object we mean by it, this may be expressed by any one or more of the properties, effects or circumstances of that object which do sufficiently distinguish it from other objects: As if I were to tell what I mean by the word *air*, I may say, it is *that thin matter which we breathe in and breathe out continually*; or it is *that fluid body in which the birds fly a little above the earth*; or it is *that invisible matter which fills all places near the earth, or which immediately encompasses the globe of earth and water*. So if I would tell what I mean by *light*, I would say it is *that medium whereby we see the colours and shapes of things*; or it is *that which distinguishes the day from the night*. If I were asked what I mean by *religion*,

I would answer, it is a *collection of all our duties to God*, if taken in a strict and limited sense; but if taken in a large sense, it is a *collection of all our duties both to God and man*. These are called the *definitions of the name*.

*Note*, In defining the name there is no necessity that we should be acquainted with the intimate essence or nature of the thing; for any manner of *description* that will but sufficiently acquaint another person what we mean by such a word, is a sufficient *definition for the name*. And on this account a *synonymous word*, or a mere *negation of the contrary*, a *translation of the word* into another tongue, or a *grammatical explication* of it, is sometimes sufficient for this purpose; as if one would know what I mean by a *sphere*, I tell him it is a *globe*; if he ask what is a *triangle*, it is that *which has three angles*; or an *oval* is that which has the *shape of an egg*. *Dark* is that which has *no light*; *asthma* is a *difficulty of breathing*; a *diaphoretick medicine*, or a *sudorifick*, is something that will *provoke sweating*; and an *insolvent*, is a man that *cannot pay his debts*.

Since it is the design of *Logick*, not only to assist us in *learning* but in *teaching* also, it is necessary that we should be furnished with some particular directions relating to the *definition of names*, both in *teaching* and *learning*.

### S E C T. III.

*Directions concerning the Definition of Names.*

Direct. I. **H**AVE a care of making use of mere words, instead of ideas, that is, such words as have no meaning, no definition belonging to them: *Do not always imagine that there are ideas wheresoever there are names*: For though mankind hath so many millions of ideas, more than they have names, yet so foolish and lavish are we, that

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too often we use some words in mere waste, and have *no ideas* for them; or at least, our ideas are so exceedingly shattered and confused, broken and blended, various and unsettled, that they can signify nothing toward the improvement of the understanding. You will find a great deal of reason for this remark, if you read the *popish schoolmen*, or the *mystick divines*.

Never rest satisfied therefore with *mere words which have no ideas belonging to them*, or at least *no settled and determinate ideas*. Deal not in such empty ware, whether you are a learner or a teacher; for hereby some persons have made themselves rich in words, and learned in their own esteem; whereas in reality, their understandings have been poor, and they knew nothing.

Let me give, for instance, some of those writers or talkers who deal much in the words *nature, fate, luck, chance, perfection, power, life, fortune, instinct, &c.* and that even in the most calm and instructive parts of their discourse; though neither they themselves nor their hearers have any settled meaning under those words; and thus they build up their reasonings, and infer what they please, with an ambition of the name of learning, or of sublime elevations in religion; whereas in truth, they do but amuse themselves and their admirers with *swelling words of vanity, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm*. But this sort of talk was reprov'd of old by the two chief apostles, St Peter and St Paul, 1 Tim. i. 7. and 2 Pet ii. 18.

When pretenders to philosophy or good sense grow fond of this sort of learning, they dazzle and confound their weak hearers, but fall under the neglect of the wise. The *Epicureans* are guilty of this fault, when they ascribe the formation of the world to *chance*: The *Aristotelians*, when they say, *Nature abhors a vacuum*: The *Stoics*, when they talk of *fate*, which is superior to the gods: And  
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the *gamesters*, when they curse their *ill-luck*, or hope for the favours of *fortune*. Whereas, if they would tell us, that by the word *nature* they mean *the properties of any being*, or *the order of things established at the creation*; that by the word *fate*, they intend the *decrees of God*, or the *necessary connection and influence of second causes and effects*; it by the word *luck* or *chance* they signify the *absolute negation of any determinate cause*, or only *their ignorance of any such cause*, we should know how to converse with them, and to assent to, or dissent from their opinions. But while they flutter in the dark, and make a noise with words which have no fixed ideas, they talk to the wind, and never can profit.

I would make this matter a little plainer still by instances borrowed from the *peripatetick* philosophy, which was once taught in all the schools. The professor fancies he has assigned the true reason, why all *heavy bodies tend downward*, why *amber will draw feathers or straws*, and the *loadstone draw iron*, when he tells you, that this is done by certain *gravitating and attractive qualities*, which proceed from the *substantial forms* of those various bodies. He imagines that he has explained why the *loadstone's north-pole* \* *shall repel the north end of a magnetick needle*, and *attract the south*, when he affirms, that this is done by its *sympathy* with one end of it, and its *antipathy* against the other end. Whereas in truth, all these names of *sympathy*, *antipathy*, *substantial forms*, and *qualities*, when they are put for the causes of these effects in bodies, are but hard words, which only express a learned and pompous ignorance of the true cause of natural appearances; and in this sense they are *mere words without ideas*.

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\* *Note*, Some writers call that the *south-pole* of a loadstone which attracts the *south end* of the needle; but I choose to follow those who call it the *north-pole*.



This will evidently appear, if one ask me, *Why a concave mirror or convex glass will burn wood in the sun-beams, or why a wedge will cleave it?* And I should tell him, it is by an *ystorious* quality in the mirror or glass, and by a *cleaving power* in the wedge, arising from a certain unknown *substantial form* in them, whence they derive these *qualities*; or if he should ask me, *Why a clock strikes, and points to the hour?* and I should say, it is by an *indicating form* and *sonorifick quality*; whereas I ought to tell him how the sun-beams are collected and united by a *burning-glass*; whence the mechanical force of a *wedge* is derived; and what are the *wheels* and *springs*, the *pointer*, and *hammer*, and *bell*, whereby a *clock* gives notice of the time, both to the eye and the ear. But these *ystorious* and *cleaving powers*, *sonorous* and *indicating forms* and *qualities*, do either teach the inquirer nothing at all but what he knew before, or they are *mere words without ideas* \*.

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\* It may be *objected* here, “And what does the modern philosopher, with all his detail of mathematical numbers, and diagrams, do more than this toward the solution of these difficulties? Does he not describe *gravity* by a certain *unknown force*, whereby *bodies tend downward to the center*? Hath he found the certain and mechanical reasons of *attraction*, *magnetism*, &c.?” I answer, That the moderns have found a thousand things by applying mathematicks to natural philosophy, which the ancients were ignorant of; and when they use any names of this kind, such as *gravitation*, *attraction*, &c. they use them only to signify, that there are such effects and such causes, with a frequent confession of their ignorance of the true springs of them: They do not pretend to make *these words* stand for the *real causes* of things, as though they thereby assigned the true philosophical solution of these difficulties; for in this sense they will still be *words without ideas*, whether in the mouth of an *old philosopher*, or a *new* one.

And there is many a man in the vulgar and in the learned world, who imagines himself deeply skilled in the *controversies of divinity*, whereas he has only furnished himself with a parcel of *scholastick* or *mystick* words, under some of which the authors themselves had no just ideas; and the learner when he hears, or pronounces them, hath scarce any ideas at all. Such sort of words sometimes have become matters of immortal contention, as though the gospel could not stand without them; and yet the zealot perhaps knows little more of them than he does of *Shibboleth*, or *Higgaion*, *Selah*. Judges xii. 6. Psal. ix. 16.

Yet here I would lay down this *caution*, that there are several objects of which we have not a clear and distinct idea, much less an adequate or comprehensive one, and yet we cannot call the names of these things, *words without ideas*; such are the *infinity* and *eternity* of God himself, the *union of our own soul and body*, the *union of the divine and human natures in Jesus Christ*, the *operation of the Holy Spirit on the mind of man*, &c. These ought not to be called *words without ideas*, for there is sufficient evidence for the reality and certainty of the existence of their objects; though there is some confusion in our clearest conceptions of them; and our ideas of them, though imperfect, are yet sufficient to converse about them, so far as we have need, and to determine so much as is necessary for our own faith and practice.

Direct. II. *Do not suppose that the natures or essences of things always differ from one another, as much as their names do.* There are various purposes in human life, for which we put very different names on the same thing, or on things whose natures are near akin; and thereby oftentimes, by making a new *nominal species*, we are ready to deceive ourselves with the idea of another *real species of beings*: And

those, whose understandings are led away by the mere sound of words, fancy the *nature* of those *things* to be very different whose names are so, and judge of them accordingly.

I may borrow a remarkable instance for my purpose almost out of every garden, which contains a variety of plants in it. Most or all plants agree in this, that they have a *root*, a *stalk*, *leaves*, *buds*, *blossoms*, and *seeds*: But the gardener ranges them under very different names, as though they were really different kinds of beings, merely because of the different use and service to which they are applied by men: As for instance, those plants whose roots are eaten, shall appropriate the names of *roots* to themselves; such are *carrots*, *turnips*, *radishes*, &c. If the *leaves* are of chief use to us, then we call them *herbs*; as *sage*, *mint*, *thyme*: If the *leaves* are eaten raw, they are termed *fallad*; as *lettuce*, *purcelain*: If boiled, they become *potherbs*; as *spinnage*, *colworts*; and some of those same plants, which are *potherbs*, in one family, are *fallad* in another. If the buds are made our food, they are called *heads*, or *tops*; so *cabbage* heads, heads of *asparagus* and *artichoaks*. If the *blossom* be of most importance, we call it a *flower*; such are *daisies*, *tulips*, and *carnations*, which are the mere blossoms of those plants. If the *husk* or *seeds* are eaten, they are called the *fruits of the ground*, as *peas*, *beans*, *strawberries*, &c. If any part of the plant be of known and common use to us in *medicine*, we call it a *physical herb*, as *carduus*, *scurvy-grass*; but if we count no part useful, we call it a *weed*, and throw it out of the garden; and yet perhaps our next neighbour knows some valuable property and use of it; he plants it in his garden, and gives it the title of an *herb*, or a *flower*. You see here how small is the real distinction of these several *plants*, considered in their general nature as the *lesser vegetables*: Yet what very different ideas we vulgarly form

form concerning them, and make different *species* of them, chiefly because of the different names given them.

Now when things are set in this clear light, it appears how ridiculous it would be for two persons to contend, whether *dandelion* be an *herb* or a *weed*; whether it be a *potherb* or *fallad*; when by the custom or fancy of different families, this one plant obtains all these names according to the several uses of it, and the value that is put upon it.

*Note* here, that I find no manner of fault with the variety of names which are given to several plants, according to the various uses we make of them. But I would not have our judgments imposed upon hereby, to think that these mere *nominal* species, namely, *herbs*, *fallads*, and *weeds*, become three *really* different species of beings, on this account, that they have different names and uses. But I proceed to other instances.

It has been the custom of mankind, when they have been angry with any thing, to add a *new ill name* to it, that they may convey thereby a hateful idea of it, though the nature of the thing still abides the same. So the Papists calls the Protestants, *Hereticks*: A profane person calls a man of piety, a *Precisian*: And in the times of the civil war in the last century, the Royalists called the Parliamentarians, *Fanaticks*, *Roundheads*, and *Sectaries*. And they in requital called the Royalists, *Malignants*: But the partizans on each side were really neither better nor worse for these names.

It has also been a frequent practice, on the other hand, to put *new favourable names* upon *ill ideas*, on purpose to take off the odium of them. But notwithstanding of these flattering names and titles, a man of profuse generosity is but a *spendthrift*; a natural son is a *bastard* still; a gallant is an *adulterer*; and a lady of pleasure is a *whore*.

Direct. III. *Take heed of believing the nature and essence of two or more things to be certainly the same, because they may have the same name given them.* This has been an unhappy and fatal occasion of a thousand mistakes in the natural, in the civil, and in the religious affairs of life, both amongst the vulgar and the learned. I shall give two or three instances, chiefly in the matters of *natural philosophy*, having hinted several dangers of this kind relating to *theology*, in the foregoing discourse concerning *equivocal words*.

Our elder philosophers having generally made use of the word SOUL to signify that principle whereby a plant grows, and they call it the *vegetative soul*; The principle of the animal motion of a brute has been likewise called a *soul*, and we have been taught to name it the *sensitive soul*: They have also given the name *soul* to the superior principle in the man, whereby he thinks, judges, reasons, &c. and though they distinguished this by the honourable title of the *rational soul*, yet in common discourse and writing we leave out the words *vegetative*, *sensitive*, and *rational*; and make the word *soul* serve for all these principles: Thence we are led early into this imagination, that *there is a sort of spiritual being in plants and in brutes, like that in men*. Whereas if we did but abstract and separate these things from words, and compare the cause of *growth* in a *plant*, with the cause of *reasoning* in *man*, (without the word *soul*) we should never think that these two principles were at all like one another; nor should we perhaps so easily and peremptorily conclude that *brutes* need an intelligent mind to perform their animal actions.

Another instance may be the word LIFE, which being attributed to *plants*, to *brutes*, and to *men*, and in each of them ascribed to the *soul*, has very easily betrayed us from our infancy into this mistake, that the *spirit* or *mind*, or *thinking principle*, in  
man,



man, is the spring of vegetative and animal life to his body: Whereas, it is evident, that if the spirit or thinking principle of man gave life to his animal nature, the way to save men from dying would not be to use medicines, but to persuade the spirit to abide in the body.

I might derive a third instance from the word HEAT, which is used to signify the *sensation we have* when we are near the fire, as well as the *cause of that sensation*, which is in the fire itself; and thence we conclude from our infancy, that *there is a sort of heat in the fire resembling our own sensation, or the heat which we feel*: Whereas in the fire there is nothing but little particles of matter, of such particular shapes, sizes, situations and motions, as are fitted to impress such motion on our flesh or nerves as excite the sense of *heat*. Now if this cause of our sensation in the fire had been always called by a distinct name, perhaps we had not been so rooted in this mistake, that *the fire is hot with the same sort of heat that we feel*. This will appear with more evidence, when we consider, that we are secure from the same mistake where there have been two different names allotted to our *sensation*, and to the *cause of it*; as, we do not say, *pain is in the fire* that burns us, or *in the knife* that cuts and wounds us; for we call it *burning in the fire, cutting in the knife*, and *pain* only when it is in ourselves.

Numerous instances of this kind might be derived from the words *sweet, sour, loud, shrill*, and almost all the *sensible qualities*, whose real natures we mistake from our very infancy, and we are ready to suppose them to be the same in us, and in the bodies that cause them; partly, because the words which signify our own sensations are applied also to signify those unknown shapes and motions of the little corpuscles, which excite and cause those sensations.

Direct.

Direct. IV. *In conversation or reading be diligent to find out the true sense, or distinct idea, which the speaker or writer affixes to his words, and especially to those words which are the chief subject of his discourse.* As far as possible take heed, lest you put more or fewer ideas into one word, than the person did when he wrote or spoke; and endeavour that your ideas of every word may be the same as his were: Then you will judge better of what he speaks or writes.

It is for want of this that men quarrel in the dark; and that there are so many contentions in the several sciences, and especially in *divinity*. Multitudes of them arise from a mistake of the true sense or complete meaning in which words are used by the writer or speaker; and hereby sometimes *they seem to agree, when they really differ* in their sentiments; and sometimes *they seem to differ, when they really agree*. Let me give an instance of both.

When one man by the word *church* shall understand *all that believe in Christ*; and another by the word *church* means only the *church of Rome*: they may both assent to this proposition, *There is no salvation out of the church*, and yet their inward sentiments may be widely different.

Again, if one writer shall affirm that *virtue added to faith is sufficient to make a Christian*, and another shall as zealously deny this proposition, they seem to differ widely in words, and yet perhaps they may both really agree in sentiment: If by the word *virtue*, the affirmer intends our *whole duty to God and man*; and the denier by the word *virtue* means only courage, or at most our *duty towards our neighbour*, without including in it the idea of the *duty which we owe to God*.

Many such sort of contentions as these are, traced to their original, will be found to be mere *logomachies*, or strifes and quarrels about *names and words*, and *vain janglings*, as the apostle calls them in his first letter of advice to *Timothy*.

In order therefore to attain *clear and distinct ideas* of what we read and hear, we must search the *sense of words*; we must consider what is their original and derivation in our own and foreign languages; what is their common sense among mankind, or in other authors, especially such as wrote in the same country, in the same age, about the same time, and upon the same subjects: We must consider in what sense the same author uses any particular *word* or *phrase*, and that when he is discoursing on the same matter, and especially about the same parts or paragraphs of his writing: We must consider whether the word be used in a strict or limited, or in a large and general sense; whether in a literal, in a figurative, or in a prophetick sense; whether it has any secondary idea annexed to it, besides the primary or chief sense. We must inquire farther, what is the scope and design of the writer; and what is the connection of that sentence with those that go before it, and those which follow it. By these and other methods we are to search out the *definition of names*, that is, the true sense and meaning in which any author or speaker uses any word, which may be the chief subject of discourse, or may carry any considerable importance in it.

Direct. V. *When we communicate our notions to others, merely with a design to inform and improve their knowledge, let us in the beginning of our discourse take care to adjust the definition of names wheresoever there is need of it; that is, to determine plainly what we mean by the chief words which are the subject of our discourse; and be sure always to keep the same ideas, whensoever we use the same words, unless we give due notice of the change. This will have a very large and happy influence, in securing not only others but ourselves too from confusion and mistake; for even writers and speakers themselves, for want of due watchfulness, are ready to affix different*

*ferent ideas to their own words*, in different parts of their discourses, and hereby bring perplexity into their own reasonings, and confound their hearers.

It is by an observation of this rule that *mathematicians* have so happily secured themselves, and the *sciences* which they have professed, from wrangling and controversy; because whensoever in the progress of their treatises they have occasion to use a new and unknown word, they always *define* it, and tell in what sense they shall take it; and in many of their writings you find a heap of *definitions* at the very beginning. Now, if the writers of *natural philosophy* and *morality* had used the same accuracy and care, they had effectually secluded a multitude of noisy and fruitless debates out of their several provinces: Nor had that sacred theme of *divinity* been perplexed with so many intricate disputes, nor the church of *Christ* been torn to pieces by so many sects and factions, if the words *grace*, *faith*, *righteousness*, *repentance*, *justification*, *worship*, *church*, *bishop*, *presbyter*, &c. had been well defined, and their significations adjusted, as near as possible, by the use of those words in the New Testament; or at least, if every writer had told us at first in what sense he would use those words.

Direct: VI. *In your own studies, as well as in the communication of your thoughts to others merely for their information, avoid ambiguous and equivocal terms as much as possible.* Do not use such words as have two or three *definitions of the name* belonging to them, that is, such words as have two or three senses, where there is any danger of mistake. Where your chief business is to inform the judgment, and to explain a matter, rather than to persuade or affect, be not fond of expressing yourselves in *figurative* language, when there are any proper words that signify the same idea in their *literal* sense. It is the *ambiguity of names*,

names, as we have often said, that brings almost infinite confusion into our *conceptions of things*.

But where there is a necessity of using an ambiguous word, there let double care be used in defining that word, and declaring in what sense you take it. And be sure to suffer no ambiguous word ever to come into your definitions.

Direct. VII. *In communicating your notions, use every word as near as possible in the same sense in which mankind commonly use it; or which writers that have gone before you have usually affixed to it, upon condition that it is free from ambiguity.* Though names are in their original merely arbitrary, yet we should always keep to the established meaning of them, unless great necessity requires the alteration; for when any word has been used to signify an idea, that old idea will recur in the mind when the word is heard or read, rather than any new idea which we may fasten to it. And this is one reason why the *received definition of names* should be changed as little as possible.

But I add farther, that though a word intirely new, introduced into a language, may be affixed to what idea you please, yet an old word ought never to be fixed to an unaccustomed idea, without just and evident necessity, or without present or previous notice, lest we introduce thereby a licence for all manner of pernicious *equivocations and falsehoods*; as for instance, when an idle boy who has not seen his book all the morning, shall tell his master that *he has learned his lesson*, he can never excuse himself by saying, that by the word *lesson* he meant his *breakfast*, and by the word *learnt* he meant *eating*; surely this would be construed a downright lie, and his fancied wit would hardly procure him a pardon.

In using an ambiguous word, which has been used in different senses, we may chuse what we think the most proper sense, as I have done, *p. 85.* in naming the *poles of the loadstone*, north or south.

And



And when a word has been used in two or three senses, and has made a great inroad for error upon that account, it is of good service to drop one or two of those senses, and leave it only one remaining, and affix the other senses or ideas to other words. So the modern philosophers, when they treat of the *human soul*, they call it the *mind*, or *mens humana*, and leave the word *anima*, or *soul*, to signify the *principle of life and motion in mere animal beings*.

The poet *Juvenal* has long ago given us a hint of this accuracy and distinction, when he says of *brutes* and *men*,

*Indulfit mudi communis conditor illis  
Tantam animas; nobis animum quoque.*

Sat. ix. v. 134.

*Exception.* There is one case, wherein some of these last rules concerning *the definition of words*, may be in some measure dispensed with; and that is, when strong and rooted prejudice hath established some favourite word or phrase, and long used it to express some mistaken notion, or to unite some inconsistent ideas; for then it is sometimes much easier to lead the world into truth by indulging their fondness for a phrase, and by assigning or applying new ideas and notions to their favourite word; and this is much safer also than to awaken all their passions by rejecting both their old words, and phrases, and notions, and introducing all new at once: Therefore we continue to say, *there is heat in the fire*, *there is coldness in ice*, rather than invent new words to express the powers which are in *fire* or *ice*, to excite the sensations of *heat* or *cold* in us. For the same reason some words and phrases which are less proper, may be continued in *theology*, while people are led into clearer ideas with much more ease and success, than if an attempt was made to change all their beloved forms of speech.

In other cases, these *logical directions* should generally

nerally be observed, and different names affixed to different ideas.

Here I cannot but take occasion to remark, that it is a considerable advantage to any language to have a *variety of new words* introduced into it, that when in course of time *new objects* and *new ideas* arise, there may be *new words* and *names* assigned to them: And also where one single name has sustained two or three ideas in time past, these new words may remove the ambiguity by being affixed to some of those ideas. This practice would, by degrees, take away part of the uncertainty of language. And for this reason I cannot but congratulate our English tongue, that it has been abundantly enriched with the translation of words from all our neighbour nations, as well as from ancient languages, and these words have been as it were enfranchised amongst us; for French, Latin, Greek, and German names, will signify English ideas as well as words that are antiently and intirely English.

It may not be amiss to mention in this place, that as the determination of the particular sense in which any word is used, is called the *definition of the name*, so the enumeration of the various senses of an equivocal word, is sometimes called the *division* or *distinction* of the name; and for this purpose good dictionaries are of excellent use.

This *distinction* of the *name* or *word* is greatly necessary in argumentation or dispute; when a fallacious argument is used, he that answers it distinguishes the several senses of some word or phrase in it, and shews in what sense it is *true*, and in what sense it is evidently *false*.

## S E C T. IV.

*Of the Definition of Things.*

**A**S there is much confusion introduced into our ideas, by the means of those *words* to which they are affixed, so the *mingling our ideas* with each other without caution, is a farther occasion whereby they become confused. A *court lady*, born and bred up amongst *pomp* and *equipage*, and the vain notions of *birth* and *quality*, constantly joins and mixes all these with the idea of herself, and she imagines these to be *essential to her nature*, and, as it were, *necessary to her being*; thence she is tempted to look upon *menial servants*, and the lowest rank of mankind, as *another species of beings*, quite distinct from herself. A *plow-boy*, that has never travelled beyond his own village, and has seen nothing but *thatched houses* and his *parish church*, is naturally led to imagine that *thatch* belongs to the very nature of a *house*, and that that must be a *church* which is built of *stone*, and especially if it has a *spire* upon it. A *child* whose *uncle* has been excessive fond, and his *schoolmaster* very severe, easily believes that *fondness* always belongs to *uncles*, and that *severity* is essential to *masters* or *instructors*. He has seen also *soldiers* with *red coats*, or *ministers* with *long black gowns*, and therefore he persuades himself that these garbs are essential to those characters, and that he is not a *minister* who has not a *long black gown*, nor can he be a *soldier* who is not dressed in *red*. It would be well if all such mistakes ended with childhood.

It might be also subjoined, that our complex ideas become confused, not only by *uniting* or *blending together more simple or single ideas* than really belong to them, as in the instances just mentioned; but obscurity and confusion sometimes come upon our ideas also, for want of uniting a sufficient number of single

*gle ideas* to make the complex one: So if I conceive of a *leopard* only as a *spotted beast*, this does not distinguish it from a *tyger* or a *lynx*, nor from many *dogs* or *horses*, which are spotted too; and therefore a *leopard* must have some more ideas added to complete and distinguish it.

I grant that it is a large and free acquaintance with the world, a watchful observation and diligent search into the nature of things, that must fully correct this kind of errors: The *rules of logick* are not sufficient to do it: But yet the *rules of logick* may instruct us by what means to distinguish one thing from another, and how to search and mark out, as far as may be, the contents and limits of the nature of distinct beings, and thus may give us great assistance towards the remedy of these mistakes.

As the *definition of names* frees us from that confusion which *words* introduce, so the *definition of things* will in some measure guard us against that confusion which *mingled ideas* have introduced: For as a *definition of the name* explains what any word means, so a *definition of the thing* explains what is the nature of that thing.

In order to form a *definition* of any thing, we must put forth these three acts of the mind.

First, Compare the thing to be defined with other things that are most like to itself, and see wherein its essence or nature agrees with them; and this is called the *general nature* or *genus* in a definition: So if you would define what *wine* is, first compare it with other things like itself, as *cyder*, *perry*, &c. and you will find it agrees essentially with them in this, that it is a *sort of juice*.

Secondly, Consider the most remarkable and primary attribute, property, or idea wherein this thing differs from those other things that are most like it; and that is its *essential* or *specific difference*: So *wine* differs from *cyder* and *perry*, and all other *juices*, in that it is *pressed from a grape*. This may be called its

*special nature*, which distinguishes it from other *juices*.

Thirdly, Join the general and special nature together, or (which is all one) the *genus* and the *difference*, and these make up a *definition*. So the *juice of a grape*, or *juice pressed from grapes*, is the *definition of wine*.

So if I would define what *winter* is, I consider first wherein it agrees with other things which are most like it, namely, *summer*, *spring*, *autumn*, and I find they are all *seasons of the year*; therefore a *season of the year* is the *genus*. Then I observe wherein it differs from these, and that is in the *shortness of the days*; for it is this which does primarily distinguish it from other *seasons*; therefore this may be called its *special nature*, or its *difference*. Then by joining these together I make a *definition*. *Winter is that season of the year wherein the days are shortest*. I confess indeed this is but a ruder definition of it, for to define it as an accurate astronomer, I must limit the days, hours and minutes.

After the same manner, if we would explain or define what the *picture of man* is, we consider first the *genus*, or *general nature* of it, which is a *representation*; and herein it agrees with many other things, as a *statue*, a *shadow*, a *print*, a *verbal description* of a man, &c. Then we consider wherein it differs from these, and we find it differs from a verbal description, in that it is a representation to the eye and not to the ear: It differs from a *statue*, in that it is a representation upon a flat surface, and not in a solid figure: It differs from a *shadow*, in that it is an abiding representation, and not a fleeting one: It differs from a *print* or *draught*, because it represents the colours by paint, as well as the shape of the object by delineation. Now so many, or rather so few of these ideas put together, as are just sufficient to distinguish a *picture* from all other representations, make up its essential difference, or its *special*



*special nature*; and all these are included its *being painted on a plain surface*. Then join this to the *genus*, which is a *representation*; and thus you have the complete definition of the *picture of a man*, namely, it is the *representation of a man in paint upon a surface (or a plane)*

Here it must be observed, that when we speak of the *genus* and *difference* as composing a *definition*, it must always be understood that the *nearest genus*, and the *specific difference* are required.

The next *general nature*, or the *nearest genus*, must be used in a definition, because it includes all the rest as parts of its complex idea; as if I would define *wine*, I must say, *wine is a juice*, which is the nearest genus; and not say, *wine is a liquid*, which is a remote and general nature; or, *wine is a substance*, which is yet more remote, for *juice* includes both *substance* and *liquid*. Besides, neither of these two remote general natures would make any distinction between *wine* and a thousand other *substances*, or other *liquids*, a *remote genus* leaves the thing too much undistinguished.

The *specific difference* is that primary attribute which distinguishes each species from one another, while they stand ranked under the same general nature or genus. Though *wine* differs from other liquids, in that it is the *juice of a certain fruit*, yet this is but a *general or generick difference*, for it does not distinguish *wine* from *cyder* or *perry*; the *specific difference of wine* therefore is its *pressure from the grape*; as *cyder* is pressed from *apples*, and *perry* from *pears*.

In definitions also, we must use the *primary attribute* that distinguishes the *species* or *special nature*, and not attempt to define *wine* by its peculiar tastes, or effects, or other properties, which are but *secondary or consequential*, when its *pressure from the grape* is the most obvious and primary distinction of it from all other juices. I confess in some cases it is not so easily known, which is the primary idea that distin-

guishes one thing from another; and therefore some would as soon define *winter* by the *coldness of the season*, as by the *shortness of the days*; though the *shortness of the days* is doubtless the most just, primary, and philosophical difference betwixt that and the other seasons of the year, since winter days are always *shortest*, but not always the *coldest*; I add also, that the *shortness of the days* is one cause of the *coldness*, but the *cold* is no cause of their *shortness*.

## S E C T. V.

### *Rules of Definition of the Thing.*

**T**HE *special rules of a good definition* are these:

Rule I. *A definition must be universal*, or as some call it, *adequate*; that is, it must agree to all the particular species or individuals that are included under the same idea; so the *juice of the grape* agrees to all proper *wines*, whether *red*, *white*, *French*, *Spanish*, *Florence*, &c.

Rule II. *It must be proper and peculiar to the thing defined, and agree to that alone*; for it is the very design of a definition effectually to distinguish one thing from all others: So the *juice of the grape* agrees to no other substance, to no other liquid, to no other being but *wine*.

These two *rules* being observed, will always render a definition *reciprocal with the thing defined*; which is a scholastick way of speaking, to signify that the definition may be used in any sentence in the place of the thing defined, or they may be mutually affirmed concerning each other, or substituted in the room of each other. *The juice of the grape is wine*, or *wine is the juice of the grape*. And wheresoever the word *wine* is used, you may put the *juice of the grape* instead of it, except when you consider

consider *wine* rather as a *word* than a *thing*, or when it is mentioned in such *logical rules*.

Rule III. *A definition ought to be clear and plain*; for the design of it is to lead us into the knowledge of the thing defined.

Hence it will follow, that the words used in a definition ought not to be *doubtful and equivocal*, and *obscure*, but as plain and easy as the language will afford: And indeed it is a general rule concerning the definition both of *names* and *things*, that no word should be used in either of them, which has any darkness or difficulty in it, unless it has been before explained or defined.

Hence it will follow also, that there are many things which cannot well be defined either as to the *name* or the *thing*, unless it be by synonymous words, or by a negation of the contrary idea, &c. for learned men know not how to make them more evident, or more intelligible, than the ideas which every man has gained by the vulgar method of teaching. Such are the ideas of *extension*, *duration*, *thought*, *consciousness*, and most of our *simple* ideas, and particularly *sensible* qualities, as *white*, *blue*, *red*, *cold*, *heat*, *sprill*, *bitter*, *sour*, &c.

We can say of *duration*, that it is a *continuance in being*, or a *not ceasing to be*; we can say of *consciousness*, that it is *as it were a feeling within ourselves*; we may say, *heat* is that which is *not cold*; or *sour* is that which is *like vinegar*; or we may point to the clear sky, and say that is *blue*. These are vulgar methods of teaching the *definitions of names*, or meaning of words. But there are some philosophers, whose attempts to define these things learnedly have wrapt up their ideas in greater darkness, and exposed themselves to ridicule and contempt; as when they define *heat*, they say, it is *Qualitas congregans homogenea & segregans heterogenea*; that is, a quality gathering together things of the same kind,

kind, and separating things of a different kind. So they define *white*, a colour arising from the prevalence of brightness: But every child knows *hot* and *white* better without these definitions.

There are many other definitions given by the peripatetick philosophers, which are very faulty by reason of their *obscurity*; as *motion* is defined by them *the act of a being in power, so far forth as it is in power*. *Time* is the measure or number of motion according to past, present, and future. The *soul* is the act of an organical natural body, having life in power; and several others of the same stamp.

Rule IV. It is also commonly prescribed amongst the rules of definition, *that it should be short*, so that it must have no tautology in it, nor any words superfluous. I confess, definitions ought to be expressed in as few words as is consistent with a clear and just explication of the nature of the thing defined, and a distinction of it from all other things beside: But it is of much more importance, and far better, that a definition should explain *clearly* the subject we treat of, though the words be many, than to leave obscurities in the sentence by confining it within too narrow limits. So in the definition which we have given of *logick*, that it is the *art of using reason well in the search after truth, and the communication of it to others*; it has indeed many words in it, but it could not be well shorter. *Art* is the genus wherein it agrees with *rhetorick*, *poesy*, *arithmetick*, *wrestling*, *sailing*, *building*, &c. for all these are *arts* also: But the difference or special nature of it is drawn from its object, *reason*; from the act *using it well*, and from its two great ends or designs, namely, the *search after truth*, and the *communication of it*; nor can it be justly described and explained in fewer ideas.

V. If we add a *fifth rule*, it must be, that neither  
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*the thing defined, nor a mere synonymous name, should make any part of the definition, for this would be no explication of the nature of the thing; and a synonymous word at best could only be a definition of the name.*

## S E C T. VI.

*Observations concerning the Definition of Things.*

**B**EFORE I part with this subject, I must propose several observations which relate to the definition of things.

*1st Observat.* There is no need that in definitions we should be confined to *one single attribute or property*, in order to express the difference of the thing defined, for sometimes the *essential* difference consists in *two or three* ideas or attributes. So a *grocer* is a man who buys and sells sugar, and plumbs, and spices, for gain. A *clock* is an engine with weights and wheels, that shews the hour of the day both by pointing and striking: And if I were to define a *repeating clock*, I must add another property, namely, that it also repeats the hour. So that the true and primary essential difference of some complex ideas consisting in several distinct properties, cannot be well expressed without conjunctive particles of speech.

*2d Observat.* There is no need that definitions should always be *positive*, for some things differ from others merely by a defect of what others have; as if a *chair* be defined a seat for a single person with a back belonging to it, then a *stool* is a seat for a single person without a back; and a *form* is a seat for several persons without a back: These are *negative* differences. So *sin* is a want of conformity to the law of God; *blindness* is a want of sight; a *vagabond* is a person without a home. Some ideas are *negative*, and their definitions ought to be so too.



3d *Observat.* Some things may have two or more definitions, and each of them equally just and good; as a *mile* is the *length of eight furlongs*, or it is the *third part of a league*. *Eternal* is that *which ever was, and ever shall be*; or it is that *which had no beginning, and shall have no end*. *Man* \* is usually defined a *rational animal*: But it may be much better to define him a *spirit united to an animal of such a shape*, or an *animal of such a peculiar shape united to a spirit*, or a *being composed of such an animal and a mind*.

4th *Observat.* Where the *essences* of things are evident, and clearly distinct from each other, there we may be more accurate and exact in the *definitions* of them: But where their *essences* approach near to each other, the *definition* is more difficult. A *bird* may be defined a *feathered animal with wings*, a *ship* may be defined a *large hollow building made to pass over the sea with sails*: But if you ask me to define a *batt*, which is between a *bird* and a *beast*, or to define a *barge* and *boy*, which are between a *boat* and a *ship*, it is much harder to define them, or to adjust the bounds of their *essence*. This is very evident in all *monstrous births*, and *irregular productions of nature*, as well as in many *works of art*, which partake so much of *one species* and so much of *another*, that we cannot tell under which *species* to rank them, or how to determine their *specifick difference*.

The several *species* of beings are seldom precisely limited in the nature of things by an uncertain and unalterable

\* The common definition of man, namely, a *rational animal*, is very faulty. 1. Because the *animal* is not *rational*; the rationality of man arises from the mind to which the animal is united. 2. Because if a spirit should be united to a *horse*, and make it a rational being, surely this would not be a *man*: It is evident therefore that the *peculiar shape* must enter into the definition of a *man* to render it just and perfect; and for want of a full description thereof, all our definitions are defective.

unalterable bounds: The essences of many things do not consist *in indivisibili*, or in one evident indivisible point, as some have imagined; but by various degrees they approach nearer to, or differ more from others that are of a kindred nature. So (as I have hinted before) in the very middle of each of the arches of a rainbow, the colours of *green*, *yellow*, and *red*, are sufficiently distinguished; but near the borders of the several arches they run into one another, so that you hardly know how to limit the colours, nor whether to call it *red* or *yellow*, *green* or *blue*.

5th *Observat.* As the *highest* or chief *genuses*, namely, *being* and *not being* can never be defined, because there is no *genus* superior to them; so neither can *singular ideas* or *individuals* be well defined, because either they have no *essential differences* from other individuals, or their differences are not known; and therefore *individuals* are only to be described by their particular circumstances: So King *George* is distinguished from all other men and other kings, by describing him as *the first king of Great Britain of the house of Brunswick*; and *Westminster Hall* is described by its situation and its use, &c.

That individual bodies can hardly have any essential difference, at least within the reach of our knowledge, may be made thus to appear; *Methuselah*, when he was nine hundred and sixty years old, and perhaps worn out with age and weakness, was the same person as when he was in his full vigour of *manhood*, or when he was an *infant*, newly born; but how far was his body the same? Who can tell whether there was any fibre of his flesh or his bones that continued the same throughout his whole life? Or who can determine which were those fibres? The *ship* in which Sir *Francis Drake* sailed round the world, might be new built, and refitted so often, that few of the same timbers remained; and who can say whether it must be called

ed the same ship or no? And what is its essential difference? How shall we define Sir *Francis Drake's* ship, or make a definition for *Methuselah*?

To this head belongs that most difficult question, *What is the principle of individuation?* Or what is it that makes any one thing *the same* as it was some time before? This is too large and laborious an inquiry to dwell upon in this place: Yet I cannot forbear to mention this hint, namely, Since our own bodies must rise at the last day for us to receive rewards or punishments in them, there may be perhaps some *original fibres* of each human body, some *stamina vitæ*, or *primeval seed of life*, which may remain unchanged through all the stages of life, death, and the grave; these may become the springs and principles of a resurrection, and sufficient to denominate it that *same body*. But if there be any such constant and vital atoms which distinguish every human body, they are known to God only.

*6th Observat.* Where we cannot find out the *essence* or *essential difference* of any *species* or *kind* of beings that we would define, we must content ourselves with a collection of such *chief parts* or *properties* of it, as may best explain it so far as it is known, and best distinguish it from other things: So a *margold* is a *flower which hath many long yellow leaves, round a little knot of seed in the midst, with such a peculiar stalk, &c.* So if we would define *silver*, we say it is a *white and hard metal, next in weight to gold*: If we would define an *elder-tree*, we might say it is *one among the lesser trees, whose younger branches are soft and full of pith, whose leaves are jagged or indented, and of such a particular shape, and it bears large clusters of small black berries*: So we must define *water, earth, stone, a lion, an eagle, a serpent*, and the greatest part of *natural beings*, by a collection of those properties, which according to our observation distinguish them from all other things. This is what

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Mr. Locke calls *nominal essences*, and *nominal definitions*. And indeed since the *essential differences* of the various natural beings or bodies round about us arise from a peculiar shape, size, motion, and situation of the small particles of which they are composed, and since we have no sufficient method to inform us what these are, we must be contented with such a *sort of definition* of the bodies they compose.

Here *note*, That this sort of definition, which is made up of a mere collection of the most remarkable parts or properties, is called an *imperfect definition*, or a *description*; whereas the *definition* is called *perfect*, when it is composed of the *essential difference*, added to the general nature or *genus*.

*7th Observat.* The *perfect definition of any being* always includes the *definition of the name* whereby it is called, for it informs us of the sense or meaning of that word, and shews us what idea that word is affixed to: But the *definition of the name* does by no means include a *perfect definition of the thing*; for as we have said before, a mere synonymous word, a negation of the contrary, or the mention of any one or two distinguishing properties of the thing, may be a sufficient *definition of the name*. Yet in those cases where the *essential difference or essence* of a thing is unknown, there a *definition of the name* by the chief properties, and a *description of the thing*, are much the same.

And here I think it necessary to take notice of one general sentiment, that seems to run through that excellent performance, Mr. Locke's *Essay on human Understanding*, and that is, "That the *essences*  
" *of things* are utterly unknown to us, and there-  
" fore all our pretences to distinguish the *essences*  
" *of things*, can reach no farther than *mere nomi-*  
" *nal essences*; or a collection of such properties as  
" we know; to some of which we affix particular  
" names, and others we bundle up, several toge-

“ther, under one name: And that all our attempts to rank beings into different kinds of species, can reach no farther than to make mere nominal species; and therefore our definitions of things are but mere nominal descriptions or definitions of the name.”

Now that we may do justice to that great author, we ought to consider that he confines this sort of discourse only to the *essence of simple ideas*, and to the *essence of substances*, as appears evident in the fourth and sixth chapters of his third book; for he allows the names of mixed modes always to signify the real essences of their species, chap. V. and he acknowledges artificial things to have real distinct species; and that in the distinction of their essences, there is generally less confusion and uncertainty than in natural, chap. VI. sect. 40, 41. though it must be confessed, that he scarce makes any distinction between the definition of the name and the definition of the thing, as chap. IV. and sometimes the current of his discourse decries the knowledge of essences in such general terms, as may justly give occasion to mistake.

It must be granted, that the *essence* of most of our simple ideas, and the greatest part of particular natural substances, are much unknown to us; and therefore the essential difference of different qualities and of the various kinds of bodies, (as I have said before) lie beyond the reach of our understandings: We know not what makes the primary real inward distinctions between red, green, sweet, sour, &c. between wood, iron, oil, stone, fire, water, flesh, clay, in their general natures, nor do we know what are the inward and prime distinctions between all the particular kinds or species in the vegetable, animal, mineral, metalick, or liquid world of things. See *Philosophical Essays*, Essay xi. sect. 1.

But still there is a very large field for the knowledge of the *essences* of things, and for the use of perfect definitions amongst our complex ideas, the modal appearances



*appearances and changes of nature, the works of art, the matters of science, and all the affairs of the civil, the moral, and the religious life: And indeed it is of much more importance to all mankind, to have a better acquaintance with the works of art for their own livelihood and daily use, with the affairs of morality for their behaviour in this world, and with the matters of religion, that they may be prepared for the world to come, than to be able to give a perfect definition of the works of nature.*

If the particular essences of natural bodies are unknown to us, we may yet be good philosophers, good artists, good neighbours, good subjects, and good Christians, without that knowledge; and we have just reason to be content.

Now that the essences of some of the *modal appearances and changes in nature*, as well as *things of art, science, and morality*, are sufficiently known to us to make *perfect definitions* of them, will appear by the specimen of a few definitions of these things.

*Motion* is a change of a place. *Swiftness* is the passing over a long space in a short time. A *natural day* is the time of an alternate revolution of light and darkness, or it is the duration of twenty-four hours. An *eclipse of the sun* is a defect in the sun's transmission of light to us by the moon interposing. \* *Snow* is congealed vapour. \* *Hail* is congealed rain. An \* *island* is a piece of land rising above the surrounding water. An \* *hill* is an elevated part of the earth, and a \* *grove* is a piece of ground thick set with trees. An *house* is a build-

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\* Note, *Island, hill, grove*, are not designed here in their more *remote and substantial natures*, (if I may so express it) or as the matter of them is *earth*; for in this sense we know not their essence, but only as considered in their *modal appearances*, whereby one *part of earth* is distinguished from another. The same may be said of *snow, hail, &c.*

ing made to dwell in. A *cottage* is a mean house in the country. A *supper* is that meal which we make in the evening. A *triangle* is a figure composed of three sides. A *gallon* is a measure containing eight pints. A *porter* is a man who carries burdens for hire. A *king* is the chief ruler in a kingdom. *Veracity* is the conformity of our words to our thoughts. *Covetousness* is an excessive love of money, or other possessions. *Killing* is the taking away the life of an animal. *Murder* is the unlawful killing of a man. *Rhetorick* is the art of speaking in a manner fit to persuade. *Natural philosophy* is the knowledge of the properties of bodies, and the various effects of them, or it is the knowledge of the various appearances in nature, and their causes; and *Logick* is the art of using our reason well, &c.

Thus you see the essential difference of various beings may be known, and are borrowed from their *qualities* and *properties*, their *causes*, *effects*, *objects*, *adjunct*, *ends*, &c. and indeed, as infinitely various as the *essences* of things are, their *definitions* must needs have very various forms.

After all, it must be confessed, that many logicians and philosophers in the former ages, have made too great a bustle about the exactness of their definition of things, and entered into long fruitless controversies, and very ridiculous debates in the several sciences, about adjusting the *logical formalities* of every definition; whereas that sort of wrangling is now grown very justly contemptible, since it is agreed that true learning and the knowledge of things depends much more upon a large acquaintance with their various properties, causes, effects, subject, object, ends and designs, than it does upon the formal and scholastick niceties of *genus* and *difference*.

## S E C T. VII.

*Of a complete Conception of Things.*

HAVING dwelt so long upon the first rule to direct our conceptions, and give an account of the *definition* both of *names* and *things*, in order to gain *clear* and *distinct* ideas, we make haste now to the *second rule*, to guide our conceptions, and that is, *Conceive of things completely in all their parts.*

All *parts* have a reference to some *whole*: Now there is an old distinction which logical writers make of a *whole* and its *parts* into four several kinds, and it may be proper just to mention them here.

1. There is a *metaphysical whole*, when the essence of a thing is said to consist of two *parts*, the *genus* and the *difference*, that is, the general and the special nature, which being joined together make up a *definition*. This has been the subject of the foregoing sections.

2. There is a *mathematical whole*, which is better called *integral*, when the several parts which go to make up the whole are really distinct from one another, and each of them may subsist apart. So the *head*, the *limbs*, and the *trunk*, are the integral parts of an animal body; so *units* are the integral parts of any large *number*; so these discourses which I have written concerning *perception*, *judgment*, *reasoning*, and *disposition*, are the four integral parts of *logic*. This sort of parts goes to make up the *completeness* of any subject, and this is the chief and most direct matter of our discourse in this section.

3. There is a *physical* or *essential whole*, which is usually made to signify and include only the two *essential parts* of man, *body* and *soul*: But I think the sense of it may better be altered, or at least en-

larged, and so include all the essential modes, attributes or properties, which are contained in the *comprehension* of any idea. This shall be the subject of discourse under the *third rule to direct our conceptions*.

4. There is a *logical whole*, which is also called an *universal*; and the *parts* of it are all the *particular ideas* to which this universal nature extends. So a *genus* is a *whole* in respect of the several *species* which are its parts. So the *species* is a *whole*, and all the *individuals* are the *parts* of it. This shall be treated of in the *fourth rule to guide conceptions*.

At present we consider an idea as an *integral whole*, and our *second rule* directs us to contemplate it in *all its parts*: But this can only refer to complex ideas, for simple ideas have no parts.

## S E C T. VIII.

### *Of Division, and the Rules of it.*

SINCE our minds are narrow in their capacity, and cannot survey the several parts of any complex being, with one single view, as God sees all things at once; therefore we must, as it were, take it to pieces, and consider of the parts separately, that we may have a more complete conception of the whole. So if I would learn the nature of a *watch*; the workman takes it to pieces and shews me the *spring*, the *wheels*, the *axles*, the *pinions*, the *balance*, the *dial-plate*, the *pointer*, the *case*, &c. and describes each of these things to me apart, together with their figures and their uses. If I would know what an *animal* is, the anatomist considers the *head*, the *trunk*, the *limbs*, the *bowels*, apart from each other, and gives me distinct lectures upon each of them. So a *kingdom* is divided into its several *provinces*; a *book* into its several *chapters*; and any  
science

science is divided according to the several *subjects* of which it treats.

This is what we properly call the *division* of an *idea*, which is an *explication* of the *whole* by its *several parts*, or an *enumeration* of the *several parts* that go to compose any *whole idea*, and to render it complete. And I think when man is divided into *body* and *soul*, it properly comes under this part of the doctrine of *integral division*, as well as when the mere *body* is divided into *head*, *trunk*, and *limbs*: This division is sometimes called *partition*.

When any of the *parts* of any *idea* are yet farther divided in order to a clear explication of the *whole*, this is called a *subdivision*; as when a *year*, is divided into *months*, each month into *days*, and each day into *hours*, which may also be farther subdivided into *minutes* and *seconds*.

It is necessary, in order to the full explication of any being, to consider *each part*, and the *properties* of it, distinct by itself, as well as in its relation to the whole: For there are many properties that belong to the several parts of a being which cannot properly be ascribed to the whole, though these properties, may fit each part for its proper station, and as it stands in that relation to the whole complex being: As in a *house*, the *doors* are moveable, the *rooms* square, the *ceilings* white, the *windows* transparent, yet the *house* is neither moveable, nor square, nor white, nor transparent.

*The special Rules of a good Division are these.*

I. Rule. *Each part singly taken must contain less than the whole, but all the parts taken collectively, (or together) must contain neither more nor less than the whole.* Therefore in if discoursing of a *tree* you divide it into the *trunk* and *leaves*, it is an imperfect division, because the *root* and the *branches* are needful to make up the whole. So *logick* would be ill divided  
into



into *apprehension, judgment and reasoning*; for *method* is a considerable part of the art which teaches us to use our reason right, and should by no means be omitted.

Upon this account, in every division wherein we design a perfect exactness, it is necessary to examine the whole idea with diligence, lest we omit any part of it through want of care; though in some cases it is not possible, and in others it is not necessary, that we should descend to the minutest parts.

II. Rule. *In all divisions we should first consider the larger and more immediate parts of the subject, and not divide it at once into the more minute and remote parts. It would by no means be proper to divide a kingdom first into streets, and lanes, and fields; but it must be first divided into provinces or counties, then those counties may be divided into towns, villages, fields, &c. and towns into streets and lanes.*

III. Rule. *The several parts of a division ought to be opposite, that is, one part ought not to contain another. It would be a ridiculous division of an animal into head, limbs, body and brain, for the brains are contained in the head.*

Yet here it must be noted, that sometimes the subjects of any treatise, or the objects of any particular science, may be properly and necessarily so divided, that the second may include the first, and the third may include the first and second, without offending against this rule, because in the second or following parts of the science or discourse, these objects are not considered in the same manner as in the first; as for instance, *geometry* divides its objects into *lines, surfaces, and solids*: Now though a *line* be contained in a *surface*, or a *solid*, yet it is not considered in a *surface* separate and alone, or as a *mere line*, as it is in the first part of *geometry*, which treats  
of

of lines. So *logick* is rightly divided into *conception*, *judgment*, *reasoning* and *method*. For though *ideas* or *conceptions* are contained in the following parts of *logick*, yet they are not there treated of as *separate ideas*, which are the proper subject of the first part.

IV Rule. *Let not subdivisions be too numerous without necessity*: For it is better many times to distinguish more parts at once, if the subject will bear it, than to mince the discourse by excessive dividing and subdividing. It is preferable therefore in a treatise of *geography*, to say, that in a *city* we will consider its *walls*, its *gates*, its *buildings*, its *streets*, and *lanes*, than to divide it formally first into the *encompassing* and the *encompassed* parts; the *encompassing* parts are the *walls* and *gates*; the *encompassed* parts include the *ways* and the *buildings*; the *ways* are the *streets* and the *lanes*; *buildings* consist of the *foundations* and the *superstructure*, &c.

Too great a number of subdivisions has been affected by some persons in sermons, treatises, instructions, &c. under pretence of greater accuracy: But this sort of subtilties hath often caused great confusion to the understanding, and sometimes more difficulty to the memory. In these cases it is only a good judgment can determine what *subdivisions* are useful.

V. Rule. *Divide every subject according to the special design you have in view*. One and the same idea or subject may be divided in very different manners, according to the different purposes we have in discoursing of it. So if a *printer* were to consider the several parts of a *book*, he must divide it into *sheets*, the *sheets* into *pages*, the *pages* into *lines*, and the *lines* into *letters*. But a *grammarian* divides a *book* into *periods*, *sentences* and *words*; or parts of speech, as *noun*, *pronoun*, *verb*, &c. A *logician* considers a *book* as divided into *chapters*, *sections*, *arguments*, *propositions*,  
ideas;

*ideas*; and, with the help of *ontology*, he divides the *propositions* into *subject*, *object*, *property*, *relation*, *action*, *passion*, *cause*, *effect*, &c. But it would be very ridiculous for a *logician* to divide a *book* into *sheets*, *pages*, and *lines*: or for a *printer* to divide it into *nouns* and *pronouns*, or into *propositions*, *ideas*, *properties*, or *causes*.

VI. Rule. *In all your divisions observe with greatest exactness the nature of things.* And here I am constrained to make a subdivision of this rule into two very necessary particulars.

(1.) *Let the parts of your division be such as are properly distinguished in nature.* Do not divide asunder those parts of the idea which are intimately united in nature, nor unite those things into one part which nature has evidently disjoined: Thus it would be very improper, in treating of an *animal body*, to divide it into the *superior* and *inferior halves*; for it would be hard to say how much belongs by nature to the *inferior half*, and how much to the *superior*. Much more improper would it be still to divide the *animal* into the *right hand parts* and *left hand parts*, which would bring greater confusion. This would be as unnatural as if a man should cleave a *hazel-nut* in halves through the *husk*, the *shell*, and the *kernel*, at once, and say, a *nut* is divided into these two parts; whereas nature leads plainly to the threefold distinction of *husk*, *shell*, and *kernel*.

(2.) *Do not affect duplicities, nor triplicities, nor any certain number of parts in your division of things*; for we know of no such certain number of parts which God the Creator has observed in forming all the varieties of his creatures; nor is there any uniform determined number of parts in the various subjects of human art or science; yet some persons have disturbed the order of nature, and abused their readers, by an affectation of *dichotomies*, *trichotomies*, *sevens*, *twelves*, &c. Let the nature of the subject, considered together with the design which you have in

in view, always determine the *number* of parts into which you divide it.

After all, it must be confessed that an intimate knowledge of things, and a judicious observation, will assist in the business of *division*, as well as of *definition*, better than too nice and curious an attention to the mere formalities of logical writers, without a real acquaintance with things.

## S E C T. IX.

*Of a comprehensive conception of things, and of abstraction.*

**T**HE *third rule* to direct our conceptions, requires us to *conceive of things comprehensively*. As we must survey an object in all its *parts* to obtain a *complete* idea of it, so we must consider it in all its *modes, attributes, properties, and relations*, in order to obtain a *comprehensive* conception of it.

The *comprehension* of an idea, as it was explained under the doctrine of universals, includes only the *essential modes or attributes* of that *idea*; but in this place the word is taken in a larger sense, and implies also the various *occasional properties, accidental modes, and relations*.

The necessity of this rule is founded upon the same reason as the former, namely, That our minds are narrow and scanty in their capacities, and as they are not able to consider all the *parts* of a complex idea *at once*, so neither can they *at once* contemplate all the different *attributes and circumstances* of it: We must therefore consider things *successively* and *gradually* in their various appearances and circumstances: As our natural eye cannot at once behold the *six sides of a dye or cube*, nor take cognizance of all the *points* that are marked on them, and therefore we turn up the sides *successively*, and thus survey and number the points that are marked on *each side*, that we may know the whole.

In order to a *comprehensive* view of any idea, we must first consider, whether the object of it has an *existence* as well as an *essence*; whether it be a *simple* or *complex idea*; whether it be a *substance* or a *mode*; if it be a *substance*, then we must inquire what are the *essential modes* of it which are necessary to its nature, and what are those *properties* or *accidents* of it which belong to it occasionally, or as it is placed in some particular circumstances: We must view it in its *internal* and *absolute* modes, and observe it in those various *external relations* in which it stands to other beings: We must consider it in its *powers* and *capacities* either to *do* or *suffer*: We must trace it up to its various *causes*, whether *supreme* or *subordinate*. We must descend to the variety of its *effects*, and take notice of the several *ends* and *designs* which are to be attained by it. We must conceive of it as it is either an *object* or a *subject*, what are the things that are *akin* to it, and what are the *opposites* or *contraries* of it; for many things are to be known both by their *contrary* and their *kindred* ideas.

If the thing we discourse of be a mere *mode*, we must inquire whether it belongs to *spirits* or *bodies*; whether it be a *physical* or *moral* mode: If *moral*, then we must consider its relation to *God*, to our *selves*, to our *neighbours*; its reference to *this life*, or the *life to come*. If it be a *virtue*, we must seek what are the *principles* of it, what are the *rules* of it, what are the *tendencies* of it, and what are the *false virtues* that counterfeit it, and what are the *real vices* that oppose it, what are the *evils* which attend the *neglect* of it, and what are the *rewards* of the *practice* of it, both *here* and *hereafter*.

If the subject be *historical*, or a *matter of fact*, we may then inquire whether the action was *done at all*; whether it was done *in such a manner*, or by *such persons* as is reported; at *what time* it was done; in *what place*; by *what motive*, and for *what design*; what is the *evidence* of the *fact*; *who are the witnesses*; what



is their *character* and *credibility*; what *signs* there are of such a fact; what *concurrent circumstances* which may either support the truth of it, or render it doubtful.

In order to make due inquiries into all these, and many other particulars which go towards the *complete* and *comprehensive* idea of any being, the science of *ontology* is exceeding necessary. This is what was wont to be called the *first part of metaphysics* in the *peripatetick* schools. It treats of *being in its most general nature, and of all its affections and relations*. I confess the old Popish schoolmen have mingled a number of useless subtilties with this science; they have exhausted their own spirits, and the spirits of their readers, in many laborious and intricate trifles; and some of their writings have been fruitful of *names without ideas*, which hath done much injury to the sacred study of divinity. Upon this account many of the moderns have most unjustly abandoned the whole science at once, and thrown abundance of contempt and raillery upon the very name of *metaphysics*; but this contempt and censure is very unreasonable, for this science, separated from some Aristotelian fooleries, and scholastic subtilties, is so necessary to a distinct conception, solid judgment, and just reasoning on many subjects, that sometimes it is introduced as a *part of logick*, and not without reason. And those, who utterly despise and ridicule it, either betray their own ignorance, or will be supposed to make their wit and banter a refuge and excuse for their own laziness. Yet this much I would add, that the later writers of *ontology* are generally the best on this account, because they have left out much of the antient jargon. See the *Brief Scheme of Ontology*, in the *Philosophical Essays*, by I. Watts.

Here let it be noted, that it is neither useful, necessary. or possible to run through *all the modes, circumstances, and relations* of every subject we take in

hand; but in *ontology* we enumerate a great variety of them, that so a judicious mind may choose what are those *circumstances, relations, and properties* of any subject, which are most necessary to the present design of him that speaks or writes, either to explain, to illustrate, or to prove the point.

As we arrive at the *complete* knowledge of an idea in all its *parts*, by that act of the mind which is called *division*, so we come to a *comprehensive* conception of a thing in its several *properties* and *relations*, by that act of the mind which is called *abstraction*; that is, we consider each single relation or property of the subject alone, and thus we do as it were withdraw and separate it in our minds both from the subject itself, as well as from other properties and relations, in order to make a fuller observation of it.

This act of *abstraction* is said to be twofold, either *precisive* or *negative*.

*Precisive abstraction* is, when we consider those things apart which cannot really exist apart; as when we consider a *mode* without considering its *substance* and *subject*, or one *essential mode* without another. *Negative abstraction* is, when we consider one thing separate from another, which may also exist without it; as when we conceive of a *subject* without conceiving of its *accidental modes* or *relations*; or when we conceive of one *accident* without thinking of another. If I think of *reading* or *writing* without the express idea of some *man*, this is *precisive abstraction*; or if I think of the *attraction of iron*, without the express idea of some particular magnetick body. But when I think of a *needle* without an idea of its *sharpness*, this is *negative abstraction*; and it is the same when I think of its *sharpness* without considering its *length*.

## S E C T. X.

*Of the extensive Conception of Things, and of Distribution.*

**A**S the *completeness* of an idea refers to the several *parts* that compose it, and the *comprehension* of an idea includes its various *properties*; so the *extension* of an idea denotes the various *sorts* or *kinds* of *beings* to which the same idea belongs: And if we would be fully acquainted with a subject, we must observe,

This *fourth rule* to direct our conceptions, namely, *Conceive of things in all their extension*; that is, we must search out the various *species*, or *special natures* which are contained under it, as a *genus* or *general nature*. If we would know the nature of an *animal* perfectly, we must take cognizance of *beasts*, *birds*, *fishes*, and *insects*, as well as *men*, all which are contained under the general nature and name of *animal*.

As an *integral whole* is distinguished into its several parts by *division*; so the word *distribution* is most properly used when we distinguish an *universal whole* into its several kinds or species: And perhaps it had been better if this word had been always confined to this signification, though it must be confessed, that we frequently speak of the *division* of an idea into its several kinds, as well as into its several parts.

The *rules* of a good *distribution* are much the same with those which we have before applied to *division*, which may be just repeated again in the briefest manner, in order to give examples of them.

I. *Rule*. Each part *singly* taken must contain less than the whole, but all the parts taken *collectively*, or *together*, must contain neither more nor less than the whole; or, as *logicians* sometimes express it, the *parts of the division* ought to *exhaust the whole thing which is divided*. So *medicine* is justly distributed into *prophylactick*, or the art of preserving health; and the-

*rapentick*, or the art of restoring health ; for there is no other sort of medicine besides these two. But *men* are not well distributed into *tall* or *short*, for there are some of a *middle stature*.

II. *Rule*. In all *distributions* we should first consider the larger and more immediate kinds or species, or ranks of being, and not divide a thing at once into the more minute and remote. A *genus* should not at once be divided into *individuals*, or even into the *lowest species*, if there be a *species superior*. Thus it would be very improper to divide *animal* into *trout*, *lobster*, *eel*, *dog*, *bear*, *eagle*, *dove*, *worm*, and *butterfly*, for these are inferior kinds ; whereas *animal* ought first to be distributed into *man*, *beast*, *bird*, *fish*, *insect* ; and then *beast* should be distributed into *dog*, *bear*, &c. *Bird* into *eagle*, *dove*, &c. *Fish* into *trout*, *eel*, *lobster*, &c.

It is irregular also to join any inferior species in the same rank or order with the superior ; as if we should distinguish *animals* into *birds*, *bears*, and *oysters*, &c. it would be a ridiculous distribution.

III. *Rule*. The several parts of a distribution ought to be opposite ; that is, one species or class of beings in the same rank of division, ought not to contain or include another ; so *men* ought not to be divided into the *rich*, the *poor*, the *learned*, and the *tall* ; for *poor men* may be both *learned* and *tall*, and so may the *rich*.

But it will be objected, Are not *animated bodies* rightly distributed into *vegetative* and *animal*, or (as they are usually called) *sensitive* ? Now the *sensitive* contains the *vegetative* nature in it, for *animals* grow as well as plants. I answer, that in this and all such distributions, the word *vegetative* signifies *merely vegetative* ; and in this sense *vegetative* will be sufficiently opposite to *animal*, for it cannot be said of an *animal*, that it contains *mere vegetation* in the idea of it.

IV. *Rule*.

IV. *Rule.* Let not subdivisions be too numerous without necessity; therefore I think *quantity* is better distinguished at once into a *line*, a *surface*, and a *solid*; than to say, as *Ramus* does, that *quantity* is either a *line*, or a *thing lined*; and a *thing lined* is either a *surface* or a *solid*.

V. *Rule* Distribute every subject according to the special design you have in view, so far as is necessary or useful to your present inquiry. Thus a *politician* distributes mankind according to their civil characters into the *rulers* and the *ruled*; and a *physician* divides them into the *sick* or the *healthy*; but a *divine* distributes them into *Turks*, *Heathens*, *Jews*, or *Christians*.

Here *note*, That it is a very useless thing to distribute any idea into such kinds or members as have no different properties to be spoken of; as it is mere trifling to divide *right angles* into such *whose legs are equal*, and *whose legs are unequal*, for as to the mere right angles they have no different properties.

VI. *Rule.* In all your distributions observe the nature of things with great exactness; and do not affect any particular form of distribution, as some persons have done, by dividing *every genus* into *two species*, or into *three species*; whereas nature is infinitely various, and human affairs and human sciences have as great a variety, nor is there any one form of distribution that will exactly suit with all subjects.

*Note*, It is to this doctrine of *distribution of a genus into its several species*, we must also refer the distribution of a *cause* according to its several *effects*, as some *medicines* are *heating*, some are *cooling*; or an *effect*, when it is distinguished by its causes, as *faith* is either *built upon divine testimony* or *human*. It is to this head we refer particular *artificial bodies*, when they are distinguished according to the *matter* they are made of, as a *statue* is either of *brass*, of *marble*, or *wood*, &c.



and any other *beings*, when they are distinguished according to their *end* and *design*, as the *furniture* of *body* or *mind* is either for *ornament* or *use*. To this head also we refer *subjects* when they are divided according to their *modes* or *accidents*; as *men* are either *mer-ry*, or *grave*, or *sad*; and *modes*, when they are divided by their *subjects*, as *distempers* belong to the *fluids*, or to the *solid parts* of the *animal*.

It is also to this place we reduce the *proposals* of a *difficulty* under its *various cases*, whether it be in *speculation* or *practice*: As, to shew the reason of *sun-beams* burning *wood*, whether it be done by a *convex glass* or a *concave*; or to shew the *construction* and *mensuration* of *triangles*, whether you have two angles and a side given, or two sides and an angle, or only three sides. Here it is necessary to distribute or *divide* a *difficulty* in all its *cases*, in order to gain a perfect knowledge of the subject you contemplate.

It might be observed here, that *logicians* have sometimes given a *mark* or *sign* to distinguish when it is an *integral whole*, that is divided into its *parts* or *members*, or when it is a *genus*, an *universal whole*, that is distributed into its *species* and *individuals*. The rule they give is this: Whensoever the whole idea can be directly and properly affirmed of each part, as, a *bird* is an *animal*, a *fish* is an *animal*, *Bucephalus* is a *horse*, *Peter* is a *man*, then it is a distribution of a *genus* into its *species*, or a *species* into its *individuals*: But when the whole cannot be thus directly affirmed concerning every part, then it is a division of an *integral* into its several *parts* or *members*; as we cannot say the *head*, the *breast*, the *hand*, or the *foot* is an *animal*, but we say, the *head* is a *part* of the *animal*, and the *foot* is another *part*.

This rule may hold true generally in corporeal beings, or perhaps in all substances: But when we say the *fear* of *God* is *wisdom*, and so is *human civility*; *criticism* is *true learning*, and so is *philosophy*: To execute a *murderer* is *justice*, and to *save* and *defend* the *in-*  
nocent

*nocent is justice too.* In these cases it is not so easily determined, whether an integral whole be divided into its parts, or an universal into its species: For the *fear of God* may be called either one *part*, or one *kind of wisdom*: *Criticism* is one *part*, or one *kind of learning*: And the *execution of a murderer* may be called a *species of justice*, as well as a *part of it*. Nor indeed is it a matter of great importance to determine this controversy.

## S E C T. XI.

### *Of an orderly Conception of Things.*

**T**HE *last rule* to direct our conceptions, is, that *we should rank and place them in a proper method and just order.* This is of necessary use to prevent confusion; for as a *trader* who never places his goods in his shop or warehouse in a regular order, nor keeps the accounts of his buying and selling, paying and receiving, in a just method, is in the utmost danger of plunging all his affairs into confusion and ruin; so a *student* who is in the search of truth, or an *author or teacher* who communicates knowledge to others, will very much obstruct his design, and confound his own mind or the minds of his hearers, unless he range his ideas in just order.

If we would therefore become successful learners or teachers, we must not conceive of things in a *confused heap*, but dispose our ideas in some *certain method*, which may be most easy and useful both for the understanding and memory; and be sure, as much as may be, *to follow the nature of things*, for which many rules might be given; namely,

1. Conceive as much as you can of the *essentials* of any subject, before you consider its *accidentals*.
2. Survey first the general *parts and properties* of any

any subject, before you extend your thoughts to discourse of the particular *kinds* or *species* of it.

3. Contemplate things first in their own *simple natures*, and afterwards view them in *composition* with other things; unless it be your present purpose to take a *compound being* to pieces, in order to find out, or to shew the nature of it, by searching and discovering of what *simples* it is composed.

4. Consider the *absolute modes* or affections of any being as it is in itself, before you proceed to consider it *relatively*, or to survey the various *relations* in which it stands to other beings, &c.

*Note*, These rules chiefly belong to the method of instruction which the learned call *synthetick*.

But in the regulation of our ideas, there is seldom an absolute necessity that we should place them in this or the other particular method: It is possible in some cases that many methods may be equally good, that is, may equally assist the understanding and the memory: To frame a method exquisitely accurate, according to the strict nature of things, and to maintain this accuracy from the beginning to the end of a treatise, is a most rare and difficult thing, if not impossible. But a larger account of *method* would be very improper in this place, lest we anticipate what belongs to the *fourth part of logick*.

## S E C T. XII.

*These five Rules of Conception exemplified.*

**I**T may be useful here to give a specimen of the *five special rules to direct our conceptions*, which have been the chief subject of this long chapter, and represent them practically in one view.

Suppose the theme of our discourse was the *passions of the mind*.

1<sup>st</sup>,

1<sup>st</sup>, To gain a *clear and distinct* idea of *passion*, we must *define* both the *name* and the *thing*.

To begin with the *definition of the name*. We are not here to understand the word *passion* in its vulgar and most limited sense, as it signifies merely *anger* or *fury*; nor do we take it in its most extensive philosophical sense, for the *sustaining the action* of an *agent*; but in the more limited philosophical sense, *passions* signify the *various affections of the mind*, such as *admiration*, *love*, or *hatred*; this is the definition of the name.

We proceed to the *definition of the thing*. *Passion* is defined a *sensation of some special commotion in animal nature, occasioned by the mind's perception of some object suited to excite that commotion*. Here \* the *genus*, or general nature of *passion*, is a *sensation of some special commotion in animal nature*; and herein it agrees with *hunger*, *thirst*, *pain*, &c. The *essential difference* of it is, that this *commotion arises from a thought or perception of the mind*, and hereby it is distinguished from *hunger*, *thirst*, or *pain*.

2<sup>dly</sup>, We must conceive of it *completely*, or survey the several parts that compose it. These are, (1.) *The mind's perception of some object*. (2.) *The consequent*

\* Since this was written, I have published a short treatise of the *passions*, wherein I have so far varied from this definition, as to call them *sensible commotions of our whole nature, both soul and body, occasioned by the mind's perceptions of some objects*, &c. I made this alteration in the description of the *passions* in that book, chiefly to include, in a more explicit manner, the *passions of desire* and *aversion*, which are acts of *volition* rather than *sensations*. Yet since some commotions of animal nature attend all the *passions*, and since there is always a *sensation* of these commotions, I shall not change the definition I have written here; for this will agree to all the *passions* whether they include any act of *volition* or not; nor indeed is the matter of any great importance. Nov. 17, 1728.

*consequent ruffle. or special commotion of the nerves, and blood, and animal spirits. And, (3.) The sensation of this inward commotion.*

3dly, We must consider it *comprehensively*, in its various *properties*. The most essential attributes that make up its nature have been already mentioned under the foregoing heads. Some of the most considerable properties that remain are these, namely, That *passion belongs to all mankind* in greater or lesser degrees: *It is not constantly present with us, but upon some certain occasions*: It is appointed by our Creator for various useful ends and purposes, namely, to give us vigour in the pursuit of what is good and agreeable to us, or in the avoidance of what is hurtful: *It is very proper for our state of trial in this world*: *It is not utterly to be rooted out of our nature, but to be moderated and governed according to the rules of virtue and religion, &c.*

4thly, We must take cognizance of the various *kinds* of it, which is called an *extensive conception* of it. If the object which the mind perceives be very *uncommon*, it excites the passion of *admiration*: If the object appears *agreeable*, it raises *love*: If the agreeable object be *absent* and *attainable*, it causes *desire*: If likely to be *obtained*, it excites *hope*: If *unattainable*, *despair*. If it be *present* and *possessed*, it is the passion of *joy*: If *lost*, it excites *sorrow*: If the object be *disagreeable*, it causes in general *hatred* or *aversion*: If it be *absent*, and yet we are in *danger* of it, it raises our *fear*: If it be *present*, it is *sorrow*, and *sadness*, &c.

5thly, All these things, and many more which go to compose a treatise on this subject, must be placed in their *proper order*: A slight specimen of which is exhibited in this short account of *passion*, and which that admirable author *Descartes* has treated of at large; though for want of sufficient experiments and observations in natural philosophy, there



there are some few mistakes in his account of animal nature.

## S E C T. XIII.

*An Illustration of these five Rules by Similitudes.*

**T**HUS we have brought the first part of *logick* to a conclusion: And it may not be improper here to represent its excellencies (so far as we have gone) by general hints of its *chief design* and *use*, as well as by a various *comparison* of it to those instruments which mankind have invented for their several conveniencies and improvements.

The *design* of *logick* is not to furnish us with the perceiving faculty, but only *direct* and *assist* us in the use of it: It doth not give us the objects of our ideas, but only *casts such a light* on those objects which nature furnishes us with, that they may be the more clearly and distinctly known: It doth not add new parts or properties to things, but it *discovers* the various parts, properties, relations, and dependencies of one thing upon another, and by *ranking all things* under *general* and *special heads*, it renders the nature, or any of the properties, powers, and uses of a thing, more easy to be found out, when we seek in what rank of beings it lies, and wherein it agrees with, and wherein it differs from others.

If any comparisons would illustrate this, it may be thus represented.

I. When *logick* assists us to attain a *clear* and *distinct* conception of the nature of things by *definition*, it is like those *glasses* whereby we behold such objects *distinctly*, as by reason of their smallness, or their great distance, appear in *confusion* to the naked eye: So the telescope discovers to us distant wonders in the heavens, and shews the *milky way*, and the *bright cloudy spots* in a very dark sky, to be a collection

collection of little stars, which the eye unassisted beholds in a mingled confusion. So when bodies are too *small* for our sight to survey them distinctly, then the *microscope* is at hand for our assistance, to shew us all the *limbs* and *features* of the most *minute animals*, with great clearness and distinction.

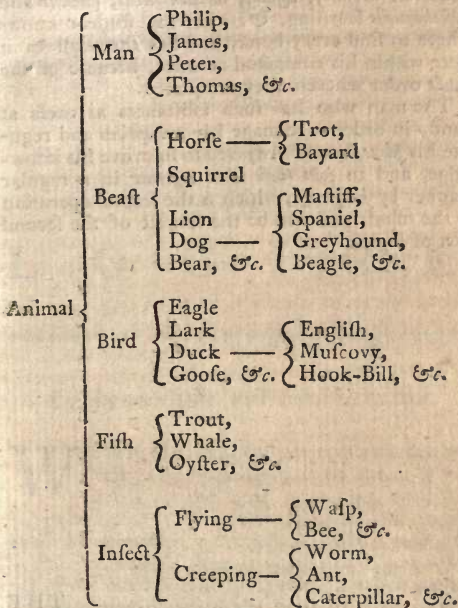
II. When we are taught by logick to view a thing *completely* in all its *parts*, by the help of *division*, it has the use of an *anatomical knife*, which dissects an animal body, and separates the *veins*, *arteries*, *nerves*, *muscles*, *membranes*, &c. and shews us the several parts which go to the composition of a complete animal.

III. When logick instructs us to survey an object *comprehensively* in all the *modes*, *properties*, *relations*, *faces*, and *appearances* of it, it is of the same use as a terrestrial globe, which turning round on its axis represents to us all the variety of *lands* and *seas*, *kingdoms* and *nations* on the surface of the earth, in a very short succession of time shews the situations and various relations of them to each other, and gives a comprehensive view of them in miniature.

IV. When this art teaches us to *distribute* any *extensive* idea into its different *kinds* or *species*, it may be compared to the *prismatick glass*, that receives the sun-beams or *rays of light*, which seem to be uniform when falling upon it, but it separates and distributes them into their different *kinds* and *colours*, and ranks them in their proper succession.

Or if we descend to *subdivisions* and subordinate ranks of being, then *distribution* may also be said to form the resemblance of a *natural tree*, wherein the *genus* or general idea stands for the *root* or *stock*, and the several *kinds* or *species*, and *individuals* are distributed abroad, and represented in their dependence and connection, like the several *boughs*, *branches*, and *lesser shoots*. For instance, let *animal* be

be the *root* of a logical tree, the resemblance is seen by mere inspection, though the root be not placed at the bottom of the page.



The same similitude will serve also to illustrate the *division* and *subdivision* of an *integral whole* into its several parts.

When logick directs us to place our all ideas in a *proper method*, most convenient both for instruction and memory, it doth the same service as the

*cases of well-contrived shelves in a large library, where-  
in folios, quartos, octavos, and lesser volumes, are dis-  
posed in such exact order under the particular  
heads of divinity, history, mathematicks, ancient and  
miscellaneous learning, &c. that the student knows  
where to find every book, and has them all as it  
were within his command at once, because of the  
exact order wherein they are placed.*

The man who has such assistances as these at hand, in order to manage his *conceptions* and regulate his *ideas*, is well prepared to improve his knowledge, and to *join these ideas together* in a regular manner by *judgment*, which is the second operation of the mind, and will be the subject of the second part of logick.

THE



THE  
SECOND PART  
OF  
LOGICK.



Of JUDGMENT *and* PROPOSITION.

WHEN the mind has got acquaintance with things by framing *ideas* of them, it proceeds to the next operation, and that is, to compare these ideas together, and to join them by *affirmation*, or disjoin them by *negation*, according as we find them to agree or disagree. This act of the mind is called *judgment*; as when we have by perception obtained the ideas of *Plato a philosopher, man innocent*, we form these judgments; *Plato was a philosopher: No man is innocent.*

Some writers have asserted, that *judgment* consists in a mere perception of the agreement or disagreement of *ideas*. But I rather think there is an act of the will (at least in most cases) necessary to form a *judgment*; for though we do perceive or think we perceive ideas to agree or disagree, yet we may sometimes re-



*frain from judging* or assenting to the perception, for fear lest the perception should not be sufficiently clear, and we should be mistaken: And I am well assured at other times, that there are multitudes of *judgments formed*, and a firm assent given to ideas *joined or disjoined*, before there is any clear perception whether they agree or disagree; and this is the reason of so many *false judgments* or mistakes among men. Both these practices are a proof that *judgment* has something of the *will* in it, and does not merely consist in *perception*; since we sometimes judge, (though unhappily) without perceiving, and sometimes we perceive without immediate judging.

As an *idea* is the result of our *conception* or *apprehension*, so a *proposition* is the effect of *judgment*: The foregoing sentences which are examples of the act of judgment are properly called *propositions*. *Plato is a philosopher, &c.*

Here let us consider,

1. *The general nature of a proposition, and the parts of which it is composed.*
2. *The various divisions or kinds of propositions.*
3. *The springs of false judgment, or the doctrine of prejudices.*
4. *General directions to assist us in judging right.*
5. *Special rules to direct us in judging particular objects.*

## CH A P. I.

*Of the Nature of a PROPOSITION, and its several Parts.*

**A** *Proposition* is a sentence wherein two or more *ideas* or *terms* are joined or disjoined by one affirmation.

affirmation or negation, as *Plato was a philosopher*: Every angle is formed by two lines meeting: No man living on earth can be completely happy. When there are ever so many ideas or terms in the sentence, yet if they are joined or disjoined merely by one single affirmation or negation, they are properly called but *one proposition*, though they may be resolved into *several* propositions which are implied therein, as will appear hereafter.

In describing a *proposition*, I use the words *terms* as well as *ideas*, because when mere ideas are joined in the mind without words, it is rather called a *judgment*; but when clothed with words it is called a *proposition*, even though it be in the mind only, as well as when it is expressed by speaking or writing.

There are *three* things which go to the nature and constitution of a proposition, namely, the *subject*, the *predicate*, and the *copula*.

The *subject* of a proposition is that concerning which any thing is affirmed or denied: So *Plato*, *angle*, *man living on earth*, are the subjects of the foregoing propositions.

The *predicate* is that which is affirmed or denied of the subject; so *philosopher* is the predicate of the first proposition; *formed by two lines meeting*, is the predicate of the second; *capable of being completely happy*, the proper predicate of the third.

The *subject* and *predicate* of a *proposition* taken together, are called the *matter* of it; for these are the materials of which it is made.

The *copula* is the *form* of a proposition; it represents the act of the mind affirming or denying, and it is expressed by the words, *am*, *art*, *is*, *are*, &c. or *am not*, *art not*, *is not*, *are not*, &c.

It is not a thing of importance enough to create dispute, whether the words *no*, *none*, *not*, *never*, &c. which disjoin the idea or terms in a negative proposition, shall be called a part of the subject of the *copula*, or of the *predicate*. Sometimes perhaps

they may seem most naturally to be included in one, and sometimes in the other of these, though a proposition is usually denominated *affirmative* or *negative* from its *copula*, as hereafter.

*Note 1.* Where each of these parts of a proposition is not expressed distinctly in so many words, yet they are all understood, and implicitly contained therein; as *Socrates disputed*, is a complete proposition, for it signifies *Socrates was disputing*. So *I die*, signifies *I am dying*. *I can write*, that is, *I am able to write*. In Latin and Greek one single word is many a times a complete proposition.

*Note 2.* These words *am*, *art*, *is*, &c. when they are used alone without any other predicate, signify both the *act of the mind judging*, which includes the *copula*, and signify also *actual existence*, which is the *predicate* of that proposition. So *Rome is*, signifies *Rome is existent*: *There are some strange monsters*: that is, *Some strange monsters are existent*: *Carthage is no more*, that is, *Carthage has no being*.

*Note 3.* The subject and predicate of a proposition, are not always to be known and distinguished by the placing of the words in the sentence, but by reflecting duly on the sense of the words, and on the mind and design of the speaker or writer: As if I say, *In Africa there are many lions*, I mean *Many lions are existent in Africa*: *Many lions* is the subject, and *existent in Africa* is the predicate. *It is proper for a philosopher to understand geometry*; here the word *proper* is the predicate, and all the rest is the subject, except *Is* the copula.

*Note 4.* The subject and predicate of a proposition ought always to be two different *ideas*, or two different *terms*; for where both the *terms* and *ideas* are the same, it is called an *identical proposition*, which is mere trifling, and cannot tend to promote knowledge; such as, *A rule is a rule*, or *A good man is a good man*.

But there are some propositions, wherein the

*terms*

*terms* of the subject and predicate seem to be the same; yet the *ideas* are not the same; nor can these be called *purely identical* or trifling propositions; such as *Home is home*; that is, *Home is a convenient or delightful place*; *Socrates is Socrates still*; that is, *The man Socrates is still a philosopher*: *The hero was not a hero*; that is, *The hero did not shew his courage*: *What I have written, I have written*; that is, *What I wrote, I still approve, and will not alter it*: *What is done, is done*; that is, *it cannot be undone*. It may be easily observed in these propositions the term is *equivocal*, for in the *predicate* it has a different idea from what it has in the *subject*.

There are also some propositions wherein the *terms* of the subject and predicate differ, but the *ideas* are the same; and these are not *merely identical* or trifling propositions; as *impudent is shameless*; a *billow* is a *wave*; or *fluctus* (in Latin) is a *wave*; a *globe* is a *round body*. In these propositions either the words are explained by a definition of the name, or the ideas by a definition of the thing, and therefore they are by no means useless, when formed for this purpose.

## C H A P. II.

### *Of the various Kinds of* PROPOSITIONS.

PROPOSITIONS may be distributed into various kinds, according to their *subject*, their *copula*, their *predicate*, their *nature* or *composition*, their *sense*, and their *evidence*,, which distributions will be explained in the following sections.

## S E C T.

## S E C T. I.

*Of universal, particular, indefinite, and singular PROPOSITIONS.*

**P**ROPOSITIONS may be divided, according to their *subject*, into *universal* and *particular*; this is usually called a division arising from the *quantity*.

An *universal proposition*, is when the subject is taken according to the whole of its extension; so if the subject be a *genus*, or a general nature, it includes all its *species* or *kinds*: If the subject be a *species*, it includes all individuals. This universality is usually signified by these words, *all*, *every*, *no*, *none*, or the like; as, *All men must die*: *No man is almighty*: *Every creature had a beginning*.

A *particular proposition*, is when the subject is not taken according to its whole extension; that is, when the term is limited and restrained to some one or more of those *species* or *individuals* whose general nature it expresses, but reaches not to all; and this is usually denoted by the words, *some*, *many*, *few*, *there are which*, &c. as, *Some birds can sing well*: *Few men are truly wise*: *There are parrots which will talk an hundred things*.

A *singular proposition*, is when the subject is a singular or individual term or idea; as, *Descartes was an ingenious philosopher*: *Sir Isaac Newton has far exceeded all his predecessors*: *The palace at Hampton Court is a pleasant dwelling*: *This day is very cold*. The subject here must be taken according to the whole of its extension, because being an *individual*, it can extend only to one, and it must therefore be regulated by the laws of *universal propositions*.

An *indefinite proposition*, is when no note, either of universality or particularity, is prefixed to a subject, which is in its own nature general; as, *A planet is ever changing its place*: *Angels are noble creatures*.



*creatures*. Now this sort of proposition, especially when it describes the nature of things, is usually counted *universal* also, and it supposes the subject to be taken in its whole extension: For if there were any *planet* which did not *change its place*, or any *angel* that were not a *noble creature*, these propositions would not be strictly true.

Yet in order to secure us against mistakes in judging of *universal*, *particular* and *indefinite* propositions, it is necessary to make these following remarks.

### I. Concerning *universal propositions*.

*Note 1.* Universal terms may either denote a *metaphysical*, a *physical*, or a *moral* universality.

A *metaphysical* or *mathematical universality*, is, when all the particulars contained under any general idea have the same predicate belonging to them, without any exception whatsoever; or when the predicate is so essential to the universal subject, that it destroys the very nature of the subject to be without it; as, *All circles have a center and circumference: All spirits in their own nature are immortal.*

A *physical* or *natural universality*, is, when according to the order and common course of nature, a predicate agrees to all the subjects of that kind, though there may be some accidental and preternatural exceptions; as, *All men use words to express their thoughts*, yet *dumb persons* are excepted; for they cannot speak. *All beasts have four feet*, yet there may be some *monsters* with five: or *maimed*, who have but three.

A *moral universality*, is when the predicate agrees to the greatest part of the particulars which are contained under the universal subject; as, *All negroes are stupid creatures: All men are governed by affection rather than by reason: All the old Romans loved their country: And the scripture uses this language, when St. Paul tells us, The Cretes are always liars.*

Now,

Now it is evident, that a special or singular conclusion cannot be inferred from a *moral universality*, nor always and infallibly from a *physical* one, though it may be always inferred from an universality which is *metaphysical*, without any danger or possibility of a mistake.

Let it be observed also, that usually we make little or no distinction in common language, between a subject that is *physically* or *metaphysically* universal.

*Note 2.* An *universal* term is sometimes taken *collectively* for all its particular ideas united together, and sometimes *distributively*, meaning each of them single and alone.

Instances of a *collective universal* are such as these: *All these apples will fill a bushel: All the hours of the night are sufficient for sleep: All the rules of grammar overload the memory.* In these propositions it is evident, that the predicate belongs not to the *individual*, separately, but to the *whole collective* idea; for we cannot affirm the same predicate if we change the word *all* into *one* or into *every*, we cannot say *one apple* or *every apple will fill a bushel*, &c. Now such a *collective idea*, when it becomes the subject of a proposition, ought to be esteemed as one single thing, and this renders the proposition *singular* or *indefinite*, as we shall shew immediately.

A *distributive universal* will allow the word *all* to be changed into *every*, or into *one*, and by this means is distinguished from a *collective*.

Instances of a *distributive universal* are the most common on every occasion; as, *All men are mortal: Every man is a sinner*, &c. But in this sort of *universal* there is a distinction to be made, which follows in the next remark.

*Note 3.* When an *universal term* is taken *distributively*, sometimes it includes all the individuals contained in its inferior species: As when I say, *Every sickness has a tendency to death*; I mean, *every individual sickness*, as well as *every kind*. But sometimes it includes

cludes no more than merely *each species* or *kind*; as when the Evangelist says, *Christ healed every disease, or every disease was healed by Christ*; that is *every kind of disease*. The *first* of these, logicians call the distribution of an universal in *singula generum*; the *last* is a distribution in *genera singulorum*. But either of them joined to the subject render a proposition *universal*.

Note 4. The *universality* of a subject is often restrained by a part of the predicate; as when we say, *All men learn wisdom by experience*: The universal subject, *all men*, is limited to signify only, *all those men who learn wisdom*. The scripture also uses this sort of language, when it speaks of *all men being justified by the righteousness of one*, Rom. v. 18. that is, *all men who are justified*, obtain it in this way.

Observe here, That not only a *metaphysical* or *natural*, but a *moral* universality also is oftentimes to be restrained by a part of the predicate; as when we say, *All the Dutch are good seamen*: *All the Italians are subtil politicians*; that is, those among the Dutch that are *seamen* are good seamen; and those among the Italians who are *politicians*, are subtil politicians, that is, they are generally so.

Note 5. The universality of a term is many times restrained by the particular *time*, *place*, *circumstance*, &c. or the *design* of the speaker; as, if we were in the city of London, and say, *All the weavers went to present their petition*; we mean only *All the weavers who dwell in the city*. So when it is said in the gospel, *All men did marvel*, Mark v. 20. it reaches only to *All those men who heard of the miracles of our Saviour*.

Here also it should be observed, that a *moral* universality is restrained by *time*, *place*, and other circumstances, as well as a *natural*; so that by these means the word *all* sometimes does not extend to a tenth part of those who at first might seem to be included in that word.

One occasion of these difficulties and ambiguities that

that belong to *universal propositions*, is the common humour and temper of mankind, who generally have an inclination to magnify their ideas, and to talk roundly and *universally* concerning any thing they speak of; which has introduced universal terms of speech into custom and habit, in all nations and all languages, more than nature or reason would dictate; yet when this custom is introduced, it is not at all improper to use this sort of language in solemn and sacred writings, as well as in familiar discourse.

## II. Remarks concerning *indefinite propositions*.

*Note 1.* Propositions carrying in them universal forms of expression may sometimes drop the *note of universality*, and become *indefinite*, and yet retain the same universal sense, whether *metaphysical*, *natural*, or *moral*, whether *collective* or *distributive*.

We may give instances of each of these.

Metaphysical; as, *A circle has a center and circumference*. Natural; as, *Beasts have four feet*. Moral; as, *Negroes are stupid creatures*. Collective; as, *The apples will fill a bushel*. Distributive; as, *Men are mortal*.

*Note 2.* There are many cases wherein a *collective idea* is expressed in a proposition by an *indefinite term*, and that where it describes the *nature* or *quality* of the subject, as well as when it declares some *past matters of fact*; as, *Fir-trees set in good order will give a charming prospect*; this must signify a *collection* of fir-trees, for one makes no prospect. In matters of fact this is more evident and frequent; as, *The Romans overcame the Gauls: The robbers surrounded the coach: The wild geese flew over the Thames in the form of a wedge*. All these are collective subjects.

*Note 3* In *indefinite propositions* the subject is often restrained by the predicate, or by the special time, place, or circumstances, as well as in propositions which are expressly universal; as, *The Chineses are ingenious*

*ingenious silk-weavers*; that is, those *Chineses* which are *silk-weavers* are *ingenious* at their work. *The stars appear to us when the twilight is gone*; this can signify no more than the *stars* which are above our horizon.

*Note 4.* All these restrictions tend to reduce some *indefinite* propositions almost into *particular*, as will appear under the next remarks.

### III. Remarks concerning *particular propositions*.

*Note 1.* A *particular* proposition may sometimes be expressed *indefinitely*, without any note of particularity prefixed to the subject; as, *In times of confusion laws are not executed: Men of virtue are disgraced, and murderers escape*; that is, *some laws, some men of virtue, some murderers*: Unless we should call this language a *moral universality*, though I think it can hardly extend so far.

*Note 2.* The words *some, a few, &c.* though they generally denote a proper *particularity*, yet sometimes they express a *collective idea*; as *Some of the enemies beset the general around: A few Greeks would beat a thousand Indians*.

I conclude this section with a few *general remarks* on this subject, namely,

*Gen. Rem. I.* Since *universal, indefinite* and *particular* terms in the plural number may either be taken in a *collective* or *distributive* sense, there is one short and easy way to find when they are *collective* and when *distributive*, namely, If the plural number may be changed into the singular, that is, if the predicate will agree to one single subject, it is a *distributive idea*; if not, it is *collective*.

*Gen. Rem. II.* *Universal* and *particular* terms in the plural number; such as, *all, some, few, many, &c.* when they are taken in their *distributive* sense, represent *several single ideas*; and when they are thus affixed to the subject of a proposition, render that



proposition *universal* or *particular*, according to the universality or particularity of the terms affixed.

*Gen. Rem. III. Universal and particular terms in the plural number, taken in their collective sense, represent generally one collective idea.*

If this one *collective idea* be thus represented (whether by universal or particular terms) as the subject of a proposition, which *describes the nature of a thing*, it properly makes either a *singular* or an *indefinite proposition*; for the words, *all, some, a few, &c.* do not then denote the *quantity* of the proposition, but are esteemed merely as terms which connect the individuals together in order to compose *one collective idea*. Observe these instances; *All the sycamores in the garden would make a large grove*; that is, this one collection of sycamores, which is a *singular idea*. *Some of the sycamores in the garden would make a fine grove*: *Sycamores would make a noble grove*: In these last the subject is rather *indefinite* than *singular*. But it is very evident, that in each of these propositions the predicate can only belong to a *collective idea*, and therefore the subject must be esteemed a *collective*.

If this *collective idea* (whether represented by universal or particular terms) be used in *describing past matters of fact*, then it is generally to be esteemed a *singular idea*, and renders the proposition *singular*; as, *All the soldiers of Alexander made but a little army*: *A few Macedonians vanquished the large army of Darius*: *Some grenadiers in the camp plundered all the neighbouring towns*.

Now we have shewn before, that if a proposition describing the *nature of things* has an *indefinite subject*, it is generally to be esteemed *universal* in its propositional sense: And if it has a *singular subject*, in its propositional sense it is always ranked with *universals*.

After all, we must be forced to confess, that the language of mankind, and the idioms of speech, are

so exceeding various, that it is hard to reduce them to a few rules; and if we would gain a just and precise idea of every *universal, particular, and indefinite* expression, we must not only consider the peculiar idiom of the language, but the time, the place, the occasion, the circumstances of the matter spoken of, and thus penetrate as far as possible into the design of the speaker or writer.

## S E C T. IV.

### *Of Affirmative and Negative PROPOSITIONS.*

**W**HEN a proposition is considered with regard to its *copula*, it may be divided into *affirmative* and *negative*; for it is the *copula* joins or disjoins the *two ideas*. Others call this a division of propositions according to their quality.

An *affirmative proposition* is when the idea of the predicate is supposed to agree to the idea of the subject, and is joined to it by the word *is*, or *are*, which is the *copula*; as, *All men are sinners*. But when the predicate is not supposed to agree with the subject, and is disjoined from it by the particles *is not*, *are not*, &c. the proposition is *negative*; as, *Man is not innocent*; or, *No man is innocent*. In an affirmative proposition, we assert one thing to belong to another, and, as it were, unite them in thought and word: In negative propositions, we separate one thing from another, and deny their agreement.

It may seem something odd, that two ideas or terms are said to be *disjoined*, as well as *joined* by a copula: But if we can but suppose the negative particles do really belong to the copula of negative propositions, it takes away the harshness of the expression; and to make it yet softer, we may consider that the predicate and subject may be properly said to be joined *in a form of words as a proposition*, by connective particles in grammar or logick, though they

are disjoined in their sense and signification. Every youth, who has learned his grammar, knows there are such words as *disjunctive propositions*.

Several things are worthy our notice on this subject.

*Note 1st*, As there are some *terms*, or *words*, and *ideas*, (as I have shewn before) concerning which it is hard to determine whether they are *negative* or *positive*, so there are some *propositions* concerning which it may be difficult to say, whether they *affirm* or *deny*: As, when we say, *Plato was no fool: Cicero was no unskilful orator: Caesar made no expedition to Muscovy: An Oyster has no part like an eel: It is not necessary for a physician to speak French; and, for a physician to speak French is needless*. The *sense* of these propositions is very plain and easy, though logicians might squabble perhaps a whole day, whether they should rank them under the names of *negative* or *affirmative*.

*Note 2d*, In Latin and English two negatives joined in one sentence make an affirmative; as when we declare, *No man is not mortal*; it is the same as though we said, *Man is mortal*. But in Greek, and oftentimes in French, two negatives make but a stronger denial.

*Note 3d*, If the mere negative term, *not*, be added to the copula of an *universal affirmative proposition*, it reduces it to a *particular negative*; as, *All men are not wise*, signifies the same as, *Some men are not wise*.

*Note 4th*, In all *affirmative propositions*, the predicate is taken in its whole comprehension; that is, every essential part and attribute of it is affirmed concerning the subject; as when I say, *A true Christian is an honest man*, every thing that belongs to *honesty* is affirmed concerning a *true Christian*.

*Note 5th*, In all *negative propositions* the predicate is taken in its whole extension; that is, every species and individual that is contained in the general idea of the predicate, is utterly denied concerning

ing the subject: So in this proposition, *A spirit is not an animal*, we exclude all sorts and kinds and particular animals whatsoever from the idea of a *spirit*.

From these two last remarks we may derive this inference, that we ought to attend to the *entire comprehension* of our ideas, and to the *universal extension* of them, as far as we have proper capacity for it, before we grow too confident in our affirming or denying any thing which may have the least darkness, doubt or difficulty attending it: It is the want of this attention that betrays us into many mistakes.

### S E C T. III.

*Of the Opposition and Conversion of PROPOSITIONS.*

ANY two ideas being joined or disjoined in various forms will afford us several propositions: All these may be distinguished according to their *quantity* and their *quality*\* into four, which are marked or denoted by the letters, A, E, I, O, thus:

A	} denotes a	{	Universal affirmative.
E			Universal negative.
I			Particular affirmative.
O			Particular negative.

according to these old Latin rhimes——

*Afferit A, negat E, verum generaliter ambae.*

*Afferit I, negat O, sed particulariter ambo.*

This may be exemplified by these two ideas, a *vine* and a *tree*.

A *Every vine is a tree.*

E *No vine is a tree.*

I *Some vine is a tree.*

O *Some vine is not a tree.*

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\* The reader should remember here, that a proposition according to its *quantity* is called *universal* or *particular*; and according to its *quality*, it is either *affirmative* or *negative*.

The logicians of the schools have written many large trifles concerning the *opposition* and *conversion* of *propositions*. It will be sufficient here to give a few brief hints of these things, that the learner may not be utterly ignorant of them.

Propositions which are made of the same subject and predicate, are said to be *opposite*, when that which is denied in one is affirmed in the other, either in whole or in part, without any consideration whether the propositions be true or no.

If they differ both in quantity and quality they are called *contradictory*; as,

A Every vine is a tree.	}	These can never be both true or both false at the same time.
O Some vine is not a tree.		

If two universals differ in quality they are *contraries*; as,

A Every vine is a tree.	}	These can never be both true together, but they may be both false.
E No vine is a tree.		

If two *particular* propositions differ in quality they are *subcontraries*; as,

I Some vine is a tree.	}	These may be both true together, but they can never be both false.
O Some vine is not a tree.		

Both *particular* and *universal* propositions which agree in quality, but not in quantity, are called *subaltern*, though these are not properly *opposite*, as,

A Every vine is a tree.

I Some vine is a tree.

Or thus:

E No vine is a tree.

O Some vine is not a tree.

The canons of *subaltern propositions* are usually reckoned these three; namely, (1.) If an *universal* proposition be true, the particular will be true also, but



but not on the contrary. And, (2.) If a *particular* proposition be false, the *universal* must be false too, but not on the contrary. (3.) *Subaltern propositions*, whether universal or particular, may sometimes be both true and sometimes both false.

The *conversion of propositions*, is when the subject and predicate change their places with preservation of the truth. This may be done with constant certainty in all *universal negatives* and *particular affirmatives*; as, *No spirit is an animal*, may be converted, *No animal is a spirit*; and, *Some tree is a vine*, may be converted, *Some vine is a tree*. But there is more of formal trifling in this sort of discourse than there is of solid improvement, because this sort of *conversion* arises merely from the *form of words*, as connected in a proposition, rather than from the *matter*.

Yet it may be useful to observe, that there are some propositions, which by reason of the *ideas* or *matter* of which they are composed, may be converted with constant truth: Such are those propositions whose predicate is a *nominal* or *real* definition of the subject, or the difference of it, or a property of the fourth kind, or a superlative degree of any property or quality whatsoever; or in short, wheresoever the predicate and the subject have exactly the same extension, or the same comprehension; as, *Every vine is a tree bearing grapes*; and, *Every tree bearing grapes is a vine*: *Religion is the truest wisdom*; and, *The truest wisdom is religion*: *Julius Cæsar was the first emperor of Rome*; and, *The first emperor of Rome was Julius Cæsar*. These are the propositions which are properly convertible, and they are called *reciprocal propositions*.

## S E C T. IV.

*Of Pure and Modal PROPOSITIONS.*

**A**NOTHER division of propositions among the scholastick writers is into *pure* and *modal*. This may be called (for distinction-sake) a division according to the predicate.

When a proposition merely expresses that the predicate is connected with the subject, it is called a *pure proposition*; as, *Every true Christian is an honest man*. But when it also includes the *way* and *manner* wherein the predicate is connected with the subject, it is called a *modal proposition*; as when I say, *It is necessary that a true Christian should be an honest man*.

Logical writers generally make the *modality* of this proposition to belong to the *copula*, because it shews the *manner* of the connection between the subject and predicate. But if the *form* of the sentence as a *logical proposition* be duly considered, the *mode* itself is the very predicate of the proposition, and it must run thus: *That a true Christian should be an honest man is a necessary thing*, and then the whole *primary* proposition is included in the subject of the *modal proposition*.

There are *four modes* of connecting the predicate with the subject, which are usually reckoned up on this occasion, namely, *necessity* and *contingency*, which are two opposites; *possibility* and *impossibility*, which are also opposites; as, *It is necessary that a globe should be round: That a globe be made of wood or glass, is an unnecessary or contingent thing: It is impossible that a globe should be square: It is possible that a globe may be made of water*.

With regard to the *modal propositions* which the schools have introduced, I would make these two remarks.

*Remark*

*Remark 1.* These propositions in English are formed by the resolution of the words, *must be*, *might not be*, *can be*, and *cannot be*, into those more explicate forms of a logical copula and predicate, *is necessary*, *is contingent*, *is possible*, *is impossible*: For *it is necessary that a globe should be round*, signifies no more than that *a globe must be round*.

*Remark 2.* Let it be noted, that this quadruple modality is only an enumeration of the *natural modes* or manners wherein the predicate is connected with the subject: We might also describe several *moral* and *civil modes* of connecting two ideas together, namely, *lawfulness* and *unlawfulness*, *conveniency* and *inconveniency*, &c. whence we may form such *modal propositions*, as these: *It is unlawful for any person to kill an innocent man: It is unlawful for Christians to eat flesh in Lent: To tell all that we think is inexpedient: For a man to be affable to his neighbour is very convenient*, &c.

There are several other *modes* of speaking whereby a predicate is connected with a subject: Such as, *it is certain*, *it is doubtful*, *it is probable*, *it is improbable*, *it is agreed*, *it is granted*, *it is said by the ancients*, *it is written*, &c. all which will form other kinds of *modal propositions*.

But whether the *modality* be *natural*, *moral*, &c. yet in all these propositions it is the *mode* is the *proper predicate*, and all the rest of the proposition, except the *copula* (or word *is*) belongs to the *subject*; and thus they become *pure propositions* of a *complex* nature, of which we shall treat in the next section; so that there is no great need of making *modals* of a distinct sort.

There are many little subtilties which the schools acquaint us with concerning the *conversion* and *opposition* and *equipollence* of these modal propositions, suited to the Latin or Greek tongues, rather than the English, and fit to pass away the idle time of a student, rather than to enrich his understanding.

SECT.

## S E C T. V.

*Of single PROPOSITIONS, whether Simple or Complex.*

**W**HEN we consider the *nature of propositions*, together with the *formation of them*, and the *materials* whereof they are made, we divide them into *single and compound*.

A *single proposition*, is that which has but one subject and one predicate; but if it has more subjects or more predicates, it is called a *compound proposition*, and indeed it contains two or more propositions in it.

A *single proposition* (which is also called *categorical*) may be divided again into *simple and complex* \*.

A *purely simple proposition* is that whose subject and predicate are made up of single terms; as, *Virtue is desirable: Every penitent is pardoned: No man is innocent.*

When the subject or predicate, or both, are made up of complex terms, it is called a *complex proposition*; as, *Every sincere penitent is pardoned: Virtue is desirable for its own sake: No man alive is perfectly innocent.*

If the term which is added to the subject of a complex proposition be either essential or any way necessary to it, then it is called *explicative*, for it only explains the subject; as, *Every mortal man is a son of Adam.* But if the term added to make up the complex subject, does not necessarily or constantly belong to it, then it is *determinative*, and limits the subject to a particular part of its extension; as,  
Every

\* As *simple ideas* are opposed to *complex*, and *single ideas* to *compound*, so propositions are distinguished in the same manner: The English tongue, in this respect, having some advantage above the learned languages, which have no usual word to distinguish *single* from *simple*.

*Every pious man shall be happy.* In the first proposition the word *mortal* is merely *explicative*: In the second proposition the word *pious* is *determinative*.

Here *note*, that whatsoever may be affirmed or denied concerning any subject, with an *explicative* addition, may be also affirmed or denied of that subject without it; as we may boldly say, *Every man is a son of Adam*, as well as *every mortal man*: But it is not so, where the addition is *determinative*, for we cannot say, *Every man shall be happy*, though *every pious man* shall be so.

In a complex proposition the predicate or subject is sometimes made complex by the pronouns *who*, *which*, *whose*, *to whom*, &c. which make another proposition; as, *Every man who is pious shall be saved: Julius, whose surname was Caesar, overcame Pompey: Bodies, which are transparent, have many pores.* Here the whole proposition is called the *primary* or *chief*, and the additional proposition is called an *incident proposition*. But it is still to be esteemed in this case merely as a part of the complex term; and the truth or falshood of the *whole complex proposition* is not to be judged by the truth or falshood of the *incident proposition*, but by the connection of the whole subject with the predicate. For the incident proposition may be false, and absurd, or impossible, and yet the whole complex proposition may be true; as, *A horse which has wings might fly over the Thames.*

Beside this *complexion* which belongs to the *subject* or *predicate*, logical writers use to say, there is a *complexion* which may fall upon the *copula* also: But this I have accounted for in the section concerning *modal propositions*; and indeed it is not of much importance whether it were placed there or here.



## S E C T. VI.

## Of Compound PROPOSITIONS.

*A Compound proposition is made up of two or more subjects or predicates, or both; and it contains in it two or more propositions, which are either plainly expressed, or concealed and implied.*

The first sort of *compound propositions* are those wherein the composition is *expressed* and *evident*, and they are distinguished into these six kinds, namely, *copulative, disjunctive, conditional, causal, relative and discretive.*

I. *Copulative propositions*, are those which have more subjects or predicates connected by affirmative or negative conjunctions; as, *Riches and honour are temptations to pride: Cæsar conquered the Gauls and the Britons: Neither gold or jewels will purchase immortality.* These propositions are evidently *compounded*, for each of them may be resolved into two propositions, namely, *Riches are temptations to pride; and Honour is a temptation to pride; and so the rest.*

The truth of *copulative* propositions depends upon the truth of all the parts of them; for if Cæsar had conquered the Gauls, and not the Britons, or the Britons, and not the Gauls, the second copulative proposition had not been true.

Here *note*, Those propositions, which cannot be resolved into two or more simple propositions, are not properly *copulative*, though two or more ideas be connected and coupled by such conjunctions, either in the subject or predicate; as *Two and three make five: Majesty and meekness do not often meet: The sun, moon, and stars, are not all to be seen at once.* Such propositions are to be esteemed merely *complex*, because the predicate cannot be affirmed of each *single* subject, but only of all of them together as a *collective* subject.

II. *Disjunctive propositions*, are when the parts are disjoined or opposed to one another by disjunctive particles; as, *It is either day or night: The weather is either shining or rainy: Quantity is either length, breadth, or depth.*

The truth of *disjunctives* depends on the necessary and immediate opposition of the parts; therefore only the last of these examples is true; but the two first are not strictly true, because *twilight* is a medium between *day* and *night*; and *dry cloudy weather* is a medium between *shining* and *raining*.

III. *Conditional or hypothetical propositions*, are those whose parts are united by the conditional particle *if*; as, *If the sun be fixed, the earth must move: If there be no fire, there will be no smoke.*

*Note*, The first part of these propositions, or that wherein the conditional is contained, is called the *antecedent*, the other is called the *consequent*.

The truth of these propositions depends not at all on the truth or falsehood of their two parts, but on the truth of the *connection* of them; for each part of them may be false, and yet the whole proposition true; as, *If there be no providence, there will be no future punishment.*

IV. *Causal propositions*, are where two propositions are joined by causal particles; as, *Houses were not built that they might be destroyed: Rehoboam was unhappy because he followed evil counsel.*

The truth of a *causal proposition* arises not from the truth of the parts, but from the *causal influence* that the one part has upon the other; for both parts may be true, yet the proposition false, if one part be not the cause of the other.

Some Logicians refer *reduplicative propositions* to this place, as *Men, considered as men, are rational creatures*, that is, because *they are men*.

V. *Relative propositions* have their parts joined by such particles, as express a relation or comparison of one thing to another; as, *When you are silent,*

*I will speak: As much as you are worth, so much shall you be esteemed: As is the father, so is the son: Where there is no tale-bearer, contention will cease.*

These are very much akin to *conditional* propositions, and the truth of them depends upon the justness of their *connection*.

VI. *Discretive propositions* are such wherein various and seemingly opposite judgments are made, whose variety or distinction is noted by the particles, *but, though, yet, &c.* as, *Travellers may change their climate, but not their temper: Job was patient, though his grief was great.*

The truth and goodness of a *discretive proposition*, depends on the truth of both parts, and their contradistinction to one another; for though both parts should be true, yet if there be no seeming opposition between them, it is an useless assertion, though we cannot call it a false one; as *Descartes was a philosopher, yet he was a Frenchman: The Romans were valiant, but they spoke Latin*; both which propositions are ridiculous, for want of a seeming opposition between the parts.

Since we have declared wherein the *truth* and *falsehood* of these *compound propositions* consist, it is proper also to give some intimations how any of these propositions when they are false may be *opposed* or *contradicted*.

All compound propositions, except *copulatives* and *discretives*, are properly denied or contradicted when the negation affects their conjunctive particles; as, if the disjunctive proposition asserts, *It is either day or night*. The opponent says, *It is not either day or night*; or, *It is not necessary that it should be either day or night*: so the *hypothetical proposition* is denied, by saying, *It does not follow that the earth must move if the sun be fixt*.

A *disjunctive proposition* may be contradicted also by denying all the parts; as, *It is neither day nor night*.

And

And a *causal proposition* may be denied or opposed *indirectly* and *improperly*, when either part of the proposition is denied; and it must be false if either part be false: But the design of the proposition being to shew the *causal connection* of the two parts, each part is supposed to be true, and it is not properly contradicted as a *causal proposition*, unless one part of it be denied to be the cause of the other.

As for *copulatives* and *discretives*, because their truth depends more on the truth of their parts, therefore these may be opposed or denied, as many ways as the parts of which they are composed may be denied; so this copulative proposition, *Riches and honour are temptations to pride*, may be denied by saying, *Riches are not temptations, though honour may be*: or, *Honour is not a temptation, though riches may be*; or, *Neither riches nor honour are temptations*, &c.

So this *discretive* proposition, *Job was patient, though his grief was great*, is denied by saying, *Job was not patient, though his grief was great*: or, *Job was patient, but his grief was not great*: or, *Job was not patient, nor was his grief great*.

We proceed now to the *second sort of compound propositions*, namely, such *whose composition is not expressed, but latent or concealed*; yet a small attention will find two propositions included in them. Such are these that follow.

1. *Exclusives*; as, *The pious man alone is happy*. *It is only Sir Isaac Newton could find out true philosophy*.

2. *Exceptives*; as, *None of the ancients but Plato well defended the soul's immortality*. *The Protestants worship none but God*.

3. *Comparatives*; as, *Pain is the greatest affliction*. *No Turk was fiercer than the Spaniards at Mexico*.

Here note, That the *comparative degree* does not always imply the *positive*; as if I say, *A fool is better than a knave*, this does not affirm that *folly is good*, but that it is a *less evil* than *knavery*.

4. *Inceptives* and *desitives*, which relate to the beginning or ending of any thing; as, *The Latin tongue is not yet forgotten. No man before Orpheus wrote Greek verse. Peter Czar of Muscovy began to civilize his nation.*

To these may be added *continuatives*; as, *Rome remains to this day*, which includes at least two propositions, namely, *Rome was*, and *Rome is*.

Here let other authors spend time and pains in giving the precise definitions in all these sorts of propositions, which may be as well understood by their names and examples: Here let them tell what their truth depends upon, and how they are to be opposed or contradicted; but a moderate share of common sense, with a review of what is said on the former *compounds*, will suffice for all these purposes, without the formality of rules.

## S E C T. VII.

### *Of true and false Propositions.*

**P**ROPOSITIONS are next to be considered according to their *sense* or *signification*, and thus they are distributed into *true* and *false*. A *true proposition* represents things as they are in themselves; but if things are represented otherwise than they are in themselves, the proposition is *false*.

Or we may describe them more particularly thus: a *true proposition* joins those ideas and terms together whose objects are joined and agree; or it disjoins those ideas and terms, whose objects disagree, or are disjoined; as, *Every bird has wings: A brute is not immortal.*

A *false proposition* joins those ideas or terms whose objects disagree, or it disjoins those whose objects agree; as, *Birds have no wings: Brutes are immortal.*

*Note*, It is impossible that the same proposition should be both true and false at the same time, in the



the same sense, and in the same respect; because a proposition is but the representation of the agreement or disagreement of things: Now it is impossible that the same thing should be and not be, or that the same thing should agree and not agree, at the same time, and in the same respect. This is a first principle of human knowledge.

Yet some propositions may seem to contradict one another, though they may be both true, but in different senses, or respects, or times; as, *Man was immortal in paradise*, and *Man was mortal in paradise*. But these two propositions must be referred to different times; as, *Man before his fall* was immortal, but *at the fall* he became mortal. So we may say now, *Man is mortal*, or *man is immortal*, if we take these propositions in different respects; as *Man is* an immortal creature *as to his soul*, but mortal *as to his body*. A great variety of difficulties and seeming contradictions, both in Holy Scripture, and other writings, may be solved and explained in this manner.

The most important question on this subject is this, *What is the criterion, or distinguishing mark of truth?* How shall we know when a proposition is really true or false? There are so many disguises of truth in the world, so many false appearances of truth, that some sects have declared there is no possibility of distinguishing *truth* from *falsehood*; and therefore they have abandoned all pretences to knowledge, and maintain strenuously that *nothing is to be known*.

The first men of this humour made themselves famous in Greece by the name of *scepticks*, that is, *seekers*: They were also called *academicks*, borrowing their name from *academia*, their school, or place of study. They taught that *all things are uncertain*, though they allowed that some are more probable than others. After these arose the sect of *Pyrrhonicks*, so named from *Pyrrho* their master, who

would not allow one proposition to be more probable than another; but professed that *all things were equally uncertain*. Now all these men (as an ingenious author expresses it) were rather to be called a sect of *liars* than *philosophers*, and that censure is just for two reasons: (1.) Because they determined concerning every proposition that *it was uncertain*, and believed that as a certain truth, while they professed *there was nothing certain*, and that nothing could be determined concerning truth or falsehood; and thus their very doctrine gave itself the lie. (2.) Because they judged and acted as other men did in the common affairs of life; they would neither run into fire nor water, though they professed ignorance and uncertainty, whether the one would burn, or the other drown them.

There have been some in all ages who have too much affected this humour, who dispute against every thing, under pretence that *truth has no certain mark to distinguish it*. Let us therefore inquire *what is the general criterion of truth?* And in order to this, it is proper to consider what is the reason why we assent to those propositions which contain the most certain and indubitable truths; such as these, *The whole is greater than a part; Two and three make five.*

The only reason why we believe these propositions to be true, is because the ideas of the subjects and predicates appear with so much clearness and strength of evidence to agree to each other, that the mind cannot help discerning the agreement, and cannot doubt of the truth of them, but is constrained to judge them true. So when we compare the ideas of a *circle* and a *triangle*, or the ideas of an *oyster* and a *butterfly*, we see such an evident disagreement between them, that we are sure that a *butterfly is not an oyster*; nor is a *triangle a circle*. There is nothing but the evidence of the agreement or disagreement

agreement between two ideas, that makes us affirm or deny the one or the other.

Now it will follow from hence, that a *clear and distinct perception, or full evidence of the agreement and disagreement of our ideas to one another, or to things*, is a certain criterion of truth: For since our minds are of such a make, that where the evidence is exceeding plain and strong, we cannot withhold our assent; we should then be necessarily exposed to believe falshood, if complete evidence should be found in any propositions that are not true. But surely the God of perfect wisdom, truth and goodness, would never oblige his creatures to be thus deceived; and therefore he would never have constituted us of such a frame as would render it naturally impossible to guard against error.

Another consequence is naturally derived from the former; and that is, that the only reason why we fall into mistake, is because we are impatient to form a judgment of things before we have a clear and evident perception of their agreement or disagreement; and if we will make haste to judge while our ideas are obscure and confused, or before we see whether they agree or disagree, we shall plunge ourselves into perpetual errors. See more on this subject in an *Essay on the Freedom of Will in God and Man*: Published in 1732. section 1. page 13.

*Note*, What is here asserted concerning the necessity of clear and distinct ideas, refers chiefly to propositions which we form *ourselves* by our own powers: As for propositions which we derive from the *testimony of others*, they will be accounted for in *chap. IV.*

SECT.

## S E C T. VIII.

*Of certain and dubious Propositions, of Knowledge and Opinion.*

SINCE we have found that *evidence* is the great criterion, and the sure mark of truth; this leads us directly to consider propositions according to their *evidence*; and here we must take notice both of the *different degrees* of evidence, and the *different kinds* of it.

Propositions according to their *different degrees* of evidence are distinguished into *certain* and *dubious* \*.

Where the *evidence* of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas is so strong and plain, that we cannot forbid nor delay our assent; the proposition is called *certain*; as, *Every circle hath a center*; *The world did not create itself*. An assent to such propositions is honoured with the name of *knowledge*.

But when there is any *obscurity* upon the agreement or disagreement of the ideas, so that the mind does not clearly perceive it, and is not compelled to assent or dissent, then the proposition, in a proper and philosophical sense, is called *doubtful* or

\* It may be objected, that this *certain* and *uncertain* being only in the mind, the division belongs to propositions rather according to the *degrees* of our *assent*, than the *degrees* of evidence. But it may be well answered, that the *evidence* here intended is that which appears so to the mind, and not the mere *evidence in the nature of things*: Besides, (as we shall shew immediately) the *degree of assent* ought to be exactly proportionable to the *degree of evidence*: And therefore the difference is not great, whether propositions be called *certain* or *uncertain*, according to the measure of *evidence*, or of *assent*.

or uncertain; as, *The planets are inhabited; The souls of brutes are mere matter; The world will not stand a thousand years longer; Dido built the city of Carthage, &c.* Such uncertain propositions are called *opinions*.

When we consider ourselves as philosophers, or *searchers after truth*, it would be well if we always suspended a full judgment or determination about any thing, and made farther inquiries, where this plain and *perfect evidence* is wanting; but we are so prone of ourselves to judge without full evidence, and in some cases the necessity of action in the affairs of life, constrains us to judge and determine upon a tolerable *degree* of evidence, that we vulgarly call those propositions *certain*, where we have but very little room or reason to doubt of them, though the evidence be not complete and resistless.

*Certainty*, according to the schools, is distinguished into *objective* and *subjective*. *Objective certainty*, is when the proposition is certainly true in itself; and *subjective*, when we are certain of the truth of it. The one is in *things*, the other is in our *minds*.

But let it be observed here, that every proposition in itself is *certainly true* or *certainly false*. For though *doubtfulness* or *uncertainty* seems to be a medium between certain truth and certain falshood in our minds, yet there is no such medium in things themselves, no, not even in future events: For now at this time it is certain in itself, that *midsummer-day seven years hence will be serene*, or it is certain it *will be cloudy*, though we are uncertain and utterly ignorant what sort of day it will be: This certainty of distant futurities is known to God only.

*Uncertain* or *dubious propositions*, that is, *Opinions*, are distinguished into *probable*, or *improbable*.

When the evidence of any proposition is greater than the evidence of the contrary, then it is a *probable opinion*: Where the evidence and arguments are stronger on the contrary side, we call it *improbable*. But while the arguments on either side seem



to be equally strong, and the evidence *for* and *against* any proposition appears equal to the mind, then in *common language* we call it a *doubtful* matter. We also call it a *dubious* or *doubtful* proposition, when there are no arguments on either side, as *next Christmas-day will be a very sharp frost*. And in general, all those propositions are *doubtful*, wherein we can perceive no sufficient marks or evidences of *truth* or *falsehood*. In such a case, the mind which is searching for truth ought to remain in a state of *doubt* or *suspense*, until superior evidence on one side or the other incline the balance of the judgment, and determine the probability or certainty to the one side.

A great many propositions which we generally believe or misbelieve in human affairs, or in the sciences, have very various degrees of evidence, which yet arise not to complete *certainty*, either of truth or falsehood. Thus it comes to pass that there are such various and almost infinite degrees of *probability* and *improbability*. To a *weak* probability we should give a *weak* assent; and a *stronger* assent is due where the evidence is greater, and the matter more probable. If we *proportion our assent in all things to the degrees of evidence*, we do the utmost that human nature is capable of in a rational way to secure itself from error.

## S E C T. IX.

*Of Sense, Consciousness, Intelligence, Reason, Faith, and Inspiration.*

AFTER we have considered the *evidence* of propositions in the various *degrees* of it, we come to survey the *several kinds of evidence*, or the different ways whereby truth is let into the mind, and which produce accordingly several kinds of knowledge. We shall distribute them into these  
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six; namely, *Sense, Consciousness, Intelligence, Reason, Faith, and Inspiration*; and then distinguish the propositions which are derived from them.

I. The *evidence of sense* is, when we frame a proposition according to the dictates of any of our senses; so we judge that *grass is green*; that a *trumpet gives a pleasant sound*; that *fire burns wood*; *water is soft*, and *iron is hard*; for we have seen, heard or felt all these. It is upon this evidence of sense, that we know and believe the daily occurrences in human life; and almost all the histories of mankind, that are written by eye or ear witnesses, are built upon this principle.

Under the evidence of sense we do not only include that knowledge which is derived to us by our outward senses of *hearing, seeing, feeling, tasting, and smelling*; but that also which is derived from the inward sensations and appetites of *hunger, thirst, ease, pleasure, pain, weariness, rest, &c.* and all those things which belong to the body; as *Hunger is a painful appetite*; *Light is pleasant*; *Rest is sweet to the weary limbs*.

Propositions which are built on this evidence, may be named *sensible propositions*, or the dictates of *sense*.

II. As we learn what belongs to the body by the *evidence of sense*, so we learn what belongs to the soul by an *inward consciousness*, which may be called a sort of *internal feeling*, or spiritual sensation of what passes in the mind; as, *I think before I speak*; *I desire large knowledge*; *I suspect my own practice*; *I studied hard to-day*; *My conscience bears witness of my sincerity*; *My soul hates vain thoughts*; *Fear is an uneasy passion*; *Long meditation on one thing is tiresome*.

Thus it appears that we obtain the knowledge of a multitude of propositions, as well as of single ideas, by those two principles which Mr. Locke calls *sensation and reflection*: One of them is a sort of *consciousness*

*sciousness* of what *affects* the body, and the other is a *consciousness* of what *passes* in the mind.

Propositions which are built on this *internal consciousness*, have yet no particular or distinguishing name assigned to them.

III. *Intelligence* relates chiefly to those abstracted propositions which carry their own evidence with them, and admit no doubt about them. Our perception of this *self-evidence* in any proposition is called *intelligence*. It is our knowledge of those first principles of truth which are, as it were, wrought into the very nature and make of our minds: They are so evident in themselves to every man who attends to them, that they need no proof. It is the prerogative and peculiar excellence of these propositions that they can scarce either be proved or denied: They cannot easily be *proved*, because there is nothing supposed to be more clear or certain, from which an argument may be drawn to prove them. They cannot well be *denied*, because their own evidence is so bright and convincing, that as soon as the terms are understood the mind necessarily assents; such are these, *Whatsoever acteth hath a being*; *Nothing has no properties*; *A part is less than the whole*; *Nothing can be the cause of itself*.

These propositions are called *axioms*, or *maxims*, or *first principles*; these are the very foundations of all improved knowledge and reasonings, and on that account these been thought to be *intimate propositions*, or truths born with us.

Some suppose that a great part of the knowledge of angels and human souls in the separate state is obtained in this manner, namely, by such an immediate view of things in their own nature, which is called *intuition*.

IV. *Reasoning* is the next sort of evidence, and that is, when one truth is inferred or drawn from others by natural and just methods of argument; as, if there be much light at midnight, I infer, it  
*proceeds*

*proceeds from the moon*; because the sun is under the earth \*. If I see a cottage in a forest, I conclude, *some man has been there and built it*. Or when I survey the heavens and earth, this gives evidence to my reason, that *there is a God who made them*.

The propositions which I believe upon this kind of evidence, are called *conclusions*, or *rational truths*: and the knowledge that we gain this way is properly called *science*.

Yet let it be noted, that the word *science* is usually applied to a whole body of regular or methodical observations or propositions, which learned men have formed concerning any subject of speculation, deriving one truth from another by a train of arguments. If this knowledge chiefly directs our *practice*, it is usually called an *art*. And this is the most remarkable distinction between an *art* and a *science*, namely. the one refers chiefly to *practice*, the other to *speculation*. *Natural philosophy*, or *physics*, and *ontology*, are *sciences*; *logick* and *rhethorick* are called *arts*; but *mathematicks* include both *art* and *science*; for they have much of speculation, and much of practice in them.

Observe here, That when the evidence of a proposition derived from *sense*, *consciousness*, *intelligence*, or *reason*, is firm and indubitable, it produces such assent as we call a *natural certainty*.

V. When we derive the evidence of any proposition from the *testimony* of others, it is called the *evidence of faith*; and this is a large part of our knowledge. Ten thousand things there are which we believe merely upon the authority or credit of those who have spoken or written of them. It is by this evidence that we know *there is such a country as China*, and *there was such a man as Cicero who dwelt in Rome*.

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\* Note, Since this book was written, we have had so many appearances of the *aurora borealis* as reduces this inference only to a probability.

It is by this that most of the transactions in human life are managed: We know our parents and our kindred by this means, we know the persons and laws of our present governors, as well as things that are at a vast distance from us in foreign nations, or in antient ages.

According as the persons that inform us of any thing are many or few, or more or less wise, and faithful, and credible, so our faith is more or less firm or wavering, and the *proposition believed* is either certain or doubtful; but in matters of *faith*, an exceeding great probability is called a *moral certainty*.

Faith is generally distinguished into *divine* and *human*, not with regard to the *propositions* that are believed, but with regard to the *testimony* upon which we believe them. When God reveals any thing to us, this gives us the evidence of *divine faith*; but what man only acquaints us with, produces a *human faith* in us; the one being built upon the word of man, arises but to *moral certainty*; but the other being founded on the word of God, arises to an *absolute* and *infallible assurance*, so far as we understand the meaning of this word. This is called *supernatural certainty*.

Propositions which we believe upon the evidence of *human testimony*, are called, *narratives, relations, reports, historical observations, &c.* but such as are built on *divine testimony*, are termed *matters of revelation*; and if they are of great importance in religion, they are called *articles of faith*.

There are some propositions or parts of knowledge, which are said to be derived from *observation* and *experience*, that is, experience in ourselves, and the observations we have made on other persons or things; but these are made up of some of the former springs of knowledge joined together, namely, *sense, consciousness, reason, faith, &c.* and therefore are not reckoned a distinct kind of evidence.

VI. *Inspiration* is a sort of evidence distinct from  
all



all the former, and that is, when such an overpowering impression of any proposition is made upon the mind *by God himself*, that gives a convincing and indubitable evidence of the truth and divinity of it: So were the prophets and the apostles inspired\*.

Sometimes God may have been pleased to make use of the outward senses, or the inward workings of the imagination, of dreams, apparitions, visions, and voices, or reasoning, or perhaps human narration, to convey divine truths to the mind of the prophet; but none of these would be sufficient to deserve the name of inspiration, without a superior or divine light and power attending them.

This sort of *evidence* is also very distinct from what we usually call *divine faith*; for every common Christian exercises *divine faith* when he believes any proposition which God has revealed in the bible upon this account, because *God has said it*, though it was by a train of reasonings that he was led to believe that *this is the word of God*. Whereas in the case of *inspiration*, the prophet not only exercises *divine faith* in believing what God reveals, but he is under a superior heavenly impression, light and evidence, whereby he is assured that God reveals it. This is the most eminent kind of *supernatural certainty*.

Though persons might be assured of their own inspiration, by some *peculiar* and *inexpressible consciousness* of this divine inspiration and evidence in their own spirits, yet it is hard to make out this inspiration to others, and to convince them of it, except by some antecedent or consequent prophecies or miracles, or some public appearances more than human.

The propositions which are attained by this sort of evidence are called *inspired truths*. This is *divine revelation* at first hand, and the dictates of God in

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\* Note here, I speak chiefly of the highest kind of *inspiration*.

an immediate manner, of which theological writers discourse at large: But since it belongs only to a few favourites of heaven to be inspired, and not the bulk of mankind, it is not necessary to speak more of it in a treatise of logick, which is designed for the general improvement of human reason.

The various kinds of evidence upon which we believe any proposition, afford us these three *remarks*:

*Remark I* The same proposition may be known to us by different kinds of evidence: That *the whole is bigger than a part* is known by our *senses*, and it is known by the *self-evidence of the thing* to our mind. That *God created the heavens and the earth* is known to us by *reason*, and is known also by *divine testimony* or *faith*.

*Remark II.* Among those various kinds of evidence, some are generally stronger than others in their own nature, and give a better ground for certainty. *Inward consciousness* and *intelligence*, as well as *divine faith* and *inspiration*, usually carry much more force with them than *sense* or *human faith*, which are often fallible; though there are instances wherein *human faith*, *sense*, and *reasoning*, lay a foundation also for complete assurance, and leave no room for doubt.

*Reason* in its own nature would always lead us into the truth in matters within its compass, if it were used aright, or it would require us to suspend our judgment where there is a want of evidence. But it is our *sloth*, *precipitancy*, *sense*, *passion*, and many other things, that lead our *reason* astray in this degenerate and imperfect state: Hence it comes to pass that we are guilty of so many errors in *reasoning*, especially about divine things, because our *reason* either is busy to inquire, and resolved to determine about matters that are above our present reach; or because we mingle many *prejudices* and secret influences of *sense*, *fancy*, *passion*, *inclination*, &c. with our exercises

exercifes of *reason*, and judge and determine according to their irregular instances.

*Divine faith* would never admit of any controversies or doubtings, if we were but assured that God had spoken, and that we rightly understood his meaning.

*Remark III.* The greatest evidence and certainty of any proposition does not depend on the variety of the ways or kinds of evidence whereby it is known, but rather upon the strength and degree of evidence, and the clearness of that light in or by which it appears to the mind. For a proposition that is known only one way may be much more certain, and have stronger evidence, than another that is supposed to be known many ways. Therefore these propositions, *Nothing has no properties; Nothing can make itself;* which are known only by *intelligence*, are much surer than this proposition, *The rainbow has real and inherent colours in it;* or than this, *The sun rolls round the earth;* though we seem to know both these last by our *senses*, and by the common *testimony of our neighbours*. So any proposition that is clearly evident to our own *consciousness* or *divine faith*, is much more certain to us than a thousand others that have only the evidence of feeble and obscure *sensations*, of mere *probable reasonings* and *doubtful arguments*, or the *witness* of fallible *men*, or even though all these should join together.

## C H A P. III.

*The Springs of false Judgment, or the Doctrine of Prejudices.*

## INTRODUCTION.

**I**N the end of the foregoing chapter, we have surveyed the several *sorts of evidence* on which we build our assent to propositions. These are indeed the general grounds upon which we form our judgments concerning things. What remains in this SECOND PART OF LOGICK is to point out the several *springs and causes of our mistakes* in judging, and to lay down some *rules* by which we should conduct ourselves in passing a judgment upon every thing that is proposed to us.

I confess many things which will be mentioned in these following chapters, might be as well referred to the THIRD PART OF LOGICK where we shall treat of *reasoning and argument*; for most of our *false judgments* seem to include a secret *bad reasoning* in them; and while we shew the *springs of error*, and the *rules of true judgment*, we do at the same time discover which arguments are fallacious, which reasonings are weak, and which are just and strong. Yet since this is usually called a *judging ill*, or *judging well*, I think we may without any impropriety treat of it here; and this will lay a surer foundation for all sorts of *ratiocination and argument*.

Rash judgments are called *prejudices*, and so are the springs of them. This word in common life signifies *an ill opinion which we have conceived of some other person*, or *some injury done to him*. But when we use the word in matters of science, it signifies *a judgment that is formed concerning any person or thing before sufficient examination*; and generally we suppose it to mean

mean a *false judgment* or *mistake*: At least, it is an opinion taken up without solid reason for it, or an assent given to a proposition before we have just evidence of the truth of it, though the thing itself may happen to be true.

Sometimes these rash judgments are called *prepossessions*; whereby is meant, that some particular opinion has possessed the mind, and engaged the assent, without sufficient search or evidence of the truth of it.

There is a vast variety of these *prejudices* and *prepossessions*, which attend mankind in every age and condition of life; they lay the foundations of many an error, and many an unhappy practice, both in the affairs of religion, and in our civil concerns; as well as in matters of learning. It is necessary for a man who pursues truth to inquire into these *springs of error*, that as far as possible he may rid himself of old *prejudices*, and watch hourly against *new ones*.

The number of them is so great, and they are so interwoven with each other, as well as with the powers of human nature, that it is sometimes hard to distinguish them apart; yet for method's sake we shall reduce them to these four general heads, namely, *Prejudices arising from things, or from words, from ourselves, or from other persons*; and after the description of each *prejudice*, we shall propose one or more ways of curing it.

## S E C T. I.

### *Prejudices arising from Things.*

**T**HE *first sort of prejudices* are those which arise from *the things themselves about which we judge*. But here let it be observed, that there is nothing in the *nature of things* that will necessarily lead us into error, if we do but use our reason aright, and withhold our judgment till there appears sufficient evidence



dence of truth. But since we are so unhappily prone to take advantage of every doubtful appearance and circumstance of things to form a wrong judgment, and plunge ourselves into mistake, therefore it is proper to consider what there is in the *things themselves* that may occasion our errors.

I. *The obscurity of some truths, and the difficulty of searching them out*, is one occasion of rash and mistaken judgment.

Some truths are *difficult* because they lie remote from the first principles of knowledge, and want a long chain of argument to come at them: Such are many of the deep things of *algebra* and *geometry*, and some of the theorems and problems of most parts of the *mathematicks*. Many things also in *natural philosophy* are dark and intricate upon this account, because we cannot come at any certain knowledge of them without the labour of many and difficult, as well as chargeable experiments.

There are other truths which have great *darkness* upon them, because we have no proper means or *mediums* to come at the knowledge of them. Though in our age we have found out many of the deep things of nature by the assistance of glasses and other instruments; yet we are not hitherto arrived at any sufficient methods to discover the shape of those little particles of matter which distinguish the several *sapours*, *odours*, and *colours* of *bodies*; nor to find what sort of atoms compose *liquids* or *solids*, and distinguish *wood*, *minerals*, *metals*, *glass*, *stone*, &c. There is a darkness also lies upon the actions of the *intellectual* or *angelical* world; their manners of subsistence and agency, the power of spirits to move bodies, and the union of our souls with this animal body of ours, are much unknown to us on this account.

Now in many of these cases, a great part of mankind is not content to be entirely ignorant; but they rather choose to form rash and hasty judgments,

ments, to guess at things without just evidence, to believe something concerning them before they can know them; and thereby fall into error.

This sort of *prejudice*, as well as most others, is cured by patience and diligence in *inquiry* and *reasoning*, and a *suspension of judgment*, till we have attained some proper *mediums* of knowledge, and till we see sufficient evidence of the truth.

II. *The appearance of things in a disguise*, is another spring of *prejudice*, or rash judgment. The outside of things, which first strikes us, is oftentimes different from their inward nature; and we are tempted to judge suddenly according to outward appearances. If a *picture* is daubed with many bright and glaring colours, the vulgar eye admires it as an excellent piece; whereas the same person judges very contemptuously of some admirable design, sketched out only with a black pencil on a coarse paper, though by the hand of a Raphael. So the scholar spies the name of a new book in a publick news-paper; he is charmed with the title, he purchases, he reads with huge expectations, and finds it is all trash and impertinence: This is a prejudice derived from the *appearance*; we are too ready to judge that volume valuable which had so good a frontispiece. The large heap of *encomiums* and swelling words of assurance, that are bestowed on *quack-medicines* in publick advertisements, tempt many a reader to judge them infallible, and to use the pills or the plaister, with vast hope, and frequent disappointment.

We are tempted to form our judgment of *persons* as well as *things* by these outward appearances. Where there is *wealth*, *equipage*, and *splendor*, we are ready to call that *man* happy; but we see not the vexing disquietudes of his soul: And when we spy a person in *ragged garments*, we form a despicable opinion of him too suddenly; we can hardly think him either *happy* or *wise*, our judgment is so  
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strangely biassed by outward and sensible things. It was through the power of this prejudice that the Jews rejected our blessed Saviour; they could not suffer themselves to believe that the man who appeared as the *son of a carpenter* was also the *Son of God*. And because *St Paul* was of little stature, a mean presence, and his voice contemptible, some of the *Corinthians* were tempted to doubt whether he was inspired or no.

This prejudice is cured by a *longer acquaintance with the world*, and a *just observation that things are sometimes better and sometimes worse than they appear to be*. We ought therefore to restrain our excessive forwardness to form our opinion of persons or things before we have opportunity to search into them more perfectly. Remember that *a grey beard does not make a philosopher*; *all is not gold that glisters*; and *a rough diamond may be worth an immense sum*.

III. *A mixture of different qualities in the same thing*, is another temptation to judge amiss. We are ready to be carried away by that quality which strikes the *first* or the *strongest impressions* upon us, and we judge of the whole object according to that quality, regardless of all the rest; or sometimes we colour over all the other qualities with that one tincture, whether it be bad or good.

When we have just reason to admire a *man* for his *virtues*, we are sometimes inclined not only to neglect his *weaknesses*, but even to put a good colour upon them, and to think them amiable. When we read a *book* that has many excellent truths in it, and divine sentiments, we are tempted to approve not only that whole book, but even all the writings of that author. When a *poet*, an *orator*, or a *painter*, has performed admirably in several illustrious pieces, we sometimes also admire his very errors, we mistake his blunders for beauties, and are so ignorantly fond as to copy after them.

It is this prejudice that has rendered so many great

great scholars perfect *bigots* and inclined them to defend Homer or Horace, Livy or Cicero, in their mistakes, and vindicate all the follies of their favourite author. It is that tempts some great writers to support the sayings of almost all the *ancient fathers of the church*, and admire them even in their very reveries.

On the other hand, if an author has professed *heretical* sentiments in religion, we throw our scorn upon every thing he writes, we despise even his critical or mathematical learning, and will hardly allow him common sense. If a *poem* has some blemishes in it, there is a set of false criticks who decry it universally, and will allow no beauties there.

This sort of prejudice is relieved by learning to distinguish things well, and not to *judge in the lump*. There is scarce any thing in the world of nature or art, in the world of morality or religion, that is perfectly uniform. There is a *mixture* of wisdom and folly, vice and virtue, good and evil, both in men and things. We should remember that some persons have *great wit* and *little judgment*; others are judicious, but not witty. Some are *good humoured without compliment*; others have all the formalities of complaisance, but no good humour. We ought to know that one man may be *vicious and learned*, while another has virtue without learning. That many a man *thinks* admirably well, who has a *poor utterance*; while others have a charming manner of speech, but their thoughts are trifling and impertinent. Some are *good neighbours*, and courteous, and charitable towards men, who have *no piety towards God*; others are truly religious, but of morose natural tempers. Some *excellent sayings* are found in very *filly books*, and some silly thoughts appear in books of value. We should neither *praise nor dispraise by wholesale*, but separate the good from the evil, and judge of them apart:

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The accuracy of a good judgment consists much in making such distinctions.

Yet let it be noted too, that in common discourse we usually denominate persons and things according to the major part of their character. He is to be called a *wise man* who has but few follies: He is a *good philosopher* who knows much of nature, and for the most part reasons well in matters of human science: And that *book should* be esteemed *well written*, which has more of good sense in it than it has of impertinence.

IV. Though a thing be uniform in its own nature, yet the *different lights in which it may be placed*, and the *different views in which it appears to us*, will be ready to excite in us mistaken judgments concerning it. Let an erect *cone* be placed on a horizontal plane, at a great distance from the eye, and it appears a plain *triangle*; but we shall judge that very *cone* to be nothing but a *flat circle*, if its *base* be obverted towards us. Set a *common round plate* a little *obliquely* before our eyes afar off, and we shall think it an *oval figure*: But if the very *edge* of it be turned towards us, we shall take it for a *straight line*. So when we view the several folds of a *changeable silk*, we pronounce this part *red*, and that *yellow*, because of its different position to the light, though the silk laid smooth in one light appears all of one colour.

When we survey the miseries of mankind, and think of the sorrows of millions, both on earth and in hell, the *divine government* has a *terrible aspect*, and we may be tempted to think hardly even of God himself: But if we view the profusion of his bounty and grace amongst his creatures on earth, or the happy spirits in heaven, we shall have so *exalted an idea of his goodness* as to forget his vengeance. Some men dwell entirely upon the promises of his gospel, and think him all *mercy*: Others, under a *melancholy frame*, dwell upon his  
terrors



terrors and his threatenings, and are overwhelmed with the thoughts of his *severity* and *vengeance*, as though there were no mercy in him.

The true method of delivering ourselves from this *prejudice*, is to view a thing on all sides, to compare all the various appearances of the same thing with one another, and let each of them have its full weight in the balance of our judgment, before we fully determine our opinion. It was by this means that the modern astronomers came to find out that the planet *Saturn* hath a *flat broad circle* round its globe, which is called its *ring*, by observing the different appearances as a *narrow* or a *broad* oval, or, as it sometimes seems to be, a *straight line*, in the different parts of its twenty-nine years revolution through the *ecliptic*. And if we take the same just and religious survey of the *great and blessed God* in all the discoveries of his vengeance and his mercy, we shall at last conclude him to be both *just* and *good*.

V. *The casual association of many of our ideas* becomes the spring of another prejudice or rash judgment, to which we are sometimes exposed. If in our younger years we have taken *medicines* that have been *nauseous*, when any medicine whatsoever is afterward proposed to us under sickness, we immediately judge it *nauseous*: Our fancy has so closely joined these ideas together, that we know not how to separate them: Then the stomach feels the disgust, and perhaps refuses the only drug that can preserve life. So a child who has been let blood joins the ideas of *pain* and the *surgeon* together and he hates the sight of the *surgeon* because he thinks of his *pain*: Or if he has drank a *bitter potion*, he conceives a bitter idea of the *cup* which held it, and will drink nothing out of that *cup*.

It is for the same reason that the bulk of the common people are so superstitiously fond of the *psalms* translated by Hopkins and Sternhold, and  
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think them sacred and divine, because they have been now for more than an hundred years bound up in the same covers with our bibles.

The best relief against this *prejudice of association* is to consider, whether there be any natural and necessary connection between these ideas, which *fancy, custom, or chance*, hath thus joined together; and if *nature* has not joined them, let our judgment correct the folly of our *imagination*, and separate these ideas again.

## S E C T. II.

### *Prejudices arising from Words.*

O UR *ideas* and *words* are so linked together, that while we judge of *things* according to *words*, we are led into several mistakes. These may be distributed under two general heads, namely, such as arise from *single words or phrases*, or such as arise from *words joined in speech, and composing a discourse*.

I. The most imminent and remarkable errors of the first kind are these three. (1) When our words are *insignificant, and have no ideas*; as when the mystical divines talk of the *prayer of silence*, the *supernatural and passive night of the soul*, the *vacuity of powers*, the *suspension of all thoughts*: Or (2.) When our words are *equivocal*, and signify two or more ideas, as the words *law, light, flesh, spirit, righteousness*, and many other terms in scripture: Or (3.) When two or three words are *synonymous*, and signify one idea, as *regeneration* and *new creation* in the New Testament; both which mean only a *change of the heart from sin to holiness*; or as the *Electer of Cologne* and the *Bishop of Cologne* are two titles of the same man.

These kinds of phrases are the occasion of various mistakes; but none so unhappy as those in *theology*: For both *words without ideas*, as well as *synonymous*

*mous* and *equivocal words*, have been used and abused by the humours, passions, interests, or by the real ignorance and weakness of men, to beget terrible contests among Christians.

But to relieve us under all those dangers, and to remove these *sort of prejudices* which arise from *single words or phrases*, I must remit the reader to Part I. chap. IV. where I have treated about *words*, and to those *directions* which I have given concerning the *definition of names*, Part I. chap. VI. sect. 3.

II. There is another sort of false judgments or mistakes which we are exposed to by *words*; and that is, when they are *joined in speech, and compose a discourse*; and here we are in danger two ways.

The one is, when a man writes good sense, or speaks much to the purpose, but he has not a happy and engaging manner of expression. Perhaps he uses coarse and vulgar words, or old, obsolete, and unfashionable language, or terms, and phrases that are foreign, latinized, scholastick, very uncommon, and hard to be understood: And this is still worse, if his sentences are long and intricate, or the sound of them harsh and grating to the ear. All these indeed are *defects in style*, and lead some nice and unthinking hearers or readers into an ill opinion of all that such a person speaks or writes. Many an excellent discourse of our forefathers has had abundance of contempt cast upon it by our modern pretenders to sense, for want of their distinguishing between the *language* and the *ideas*.

On the other hand when a *man of eloquence* speaks or writes upon any subject, we are too ready to run into his sentiments, being sweetly and insensibly drawn by the smoothness of his harangue, and the pathetick power of his language. *Rhetorick* will varnish every *error*, so that it shall appear in the dress of *truth*, and put such ornaments upon *vice*, as to make it look like *virtue*: It is an art of wondrous and extensive influence; it often conceals,

obscures or overwhelms the truth, and places sometimes a gross falshood in a most alluring light. The decency of action, the musick of the voice, the harmony of the periods, the beauty of the stile, and all the engaging airs of the speaker, have often charmed the hearers into error, and perswaded them to approve whatsoever is proposed in so agreeable a manner. A large assembly stands exposed at once to the power of these prejudices, and imbibes them all. So Cicero and Demosthenes made the Romans and the Athenians believe almost whatsoever they pleased.

The best defence against both these dangers, is to learn the skill (as much as possible) of *separating our thoughts and ideas from words and phrases*, to judge of the things in their own natures, and in their natural or just relation to one another, abstracted from the use of language, and to maintain a steady and obstinate resolution, to hearken to nothing but truth, in whatsoever stile or dress it appears.

Then we shall hear a sermon of pious and just sentiments with esteem and reverence, though the preacher has but an unpolished stile, and many defects in the manner of his delivery. Then we shall neglect and disregard all the flattering insinuations, whereby the *orator* would make way for his own sentiments to take the possession of our souls, if he has not solid and instructive sense equal to his language. *Oratory* is a happy talent when it is rightly employed, to excite the passions to the practice of virtue and piety; but, to speak properly, this *art* has nothing to do in the *search after truth*.

## S E C T. III.

*Prejudices arising from ourselves.*

**N**EITHER *words* nor *things* would so often lead us astray from truth, if we had not within ourselves such springs of error as these that follow.

I. Many errors are derived from our *weakness of reason*, and *incapacity to judge of things in our infant state*. These are called the *prejudices of infancy*. We frame early mistakes about the common objects which surround us, and the common affairs of life: We fancy *the nurse is our best friend*, because children receive from their nurses their food and other conveniencies of life. We judge that *books are very unpleasant things*, because perhaps we have been driven to them by the scourge. We judge also that *the sky touches the distant hills*, because we cannot inform ourselves better in childhood. We believe the *stars are not risen till the sun is set*, because we never see them by day. But some of these errors may seem to be derived from the next spring.

The way to cure the *prejudices of infancy*, is to distinguish, as far as we can, which are those opinions which we framed in perfect childhood; to remember that at that time our reason was incapable of forming a right judgment, and to bring these propositions again to be examined at the bar of mature reason.

II. Our *senses* give us many a false information of things, and tempt us to judge amiss. This is called *prejudice of sense*; as, when we suppose the *sun and moon to be flat bodies*, and to be but *a few inches broad*, because they appear so to the eye. Sense inclines us to judge that *air has no weight*, because we do not feel it press heavy upon us; and we judge also by our senses that *cold and heat, sweet*



and *four*, *red* and *blue*, &c. are such real properties in the objects themselves, and exactly like those sensations which they excite in us.

*Note*, Those mistakes of this sort which all mankind drop and lose in their advancing age, are called mere *prejudices of infancy*; but those which abide with the vulgar part of the world, and generally with all men, till learning and philosophy cure them, more properly attain the name of *prejudices of sense*.

These *prejudices* are to be removed several ways. (1.) By the assistance of one sense we cure the mistakes of another; as when a *stick thrust into the water seems crooked*, we are prevented from judging it to be really so in itself, for when we take it out of the water, both our sight and feeling agree and determine it to be straight. (2.) The exercise of our reason, and an application to mathematical and philosophical studies, cures many other *prejudices of sense*, both with relation to the heavenly and earthly bodies. (3.) We should remember that our senses have often deceived us in various instances; that they give but a confused and imperfect representation of things in many cases; that they often represent falsely those very objects to which they seem to be suited, such as the *shape*, *motion*, *size* and *situation*, of gross bodies, if they are but placed at a distance from us; and as for the minute particles of which bodies are composed, our senses cannot distinguish them. (4.) We should remember also, that one prime and original design of our senses, is to inform us what various relations the bodies that are round about us bear to our own animal body, and to give us notice what is pleasant and useful, or what is painful or injurious to us; but they are not sufficient of themselves to lead us into a philosophical acquaintance with the inward nature of things. It must be confessed, it is by the assistance of the *eye* and the *ear* especially (which  
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are called the *senses of discipline*) that our minds are furnished with various parts of knowledge, by reading, hearing, and observing things divine and human; yet reason ought always to accompany the exercise of our *senses*, whenever we would form a just judgment of things proposed to our inquiry.

Here it is proper to observe also, that as the *weakness of reason* in our infancy, and the dictates of our *senses*, sometimes in *advancing years*, lead the wiser part of mankind astray from truth; so the meaner parts of our species, persons whose genius is very low, whose judgment is always weak, who are ever indulging the *dictates of sense and humour*, are but children of a large size, they stand exposed to everlasting mistakes in life, and live and die in the midst of *prejudices*.

III. *Imagination* is another fruitful spring of *false judgments*. Our *imagination* is nothing else but the various appearances of our sensible ideas in the brain, where the soul frequently works in uniting disjoining, multiplying, magnifying, diminishing and altering the several shapes, colours, sounds, motions, words and things, that have been communicated to us by the outward organs of sense. It is no wonder therefore if *fancy* leads us into many mistakes, for it is but *sense at second hand*. Whatever is strongly impressed upon the *imagination*, some persons believe to be true. Some will choose a particular *number in a lottery*, or lay a large wager on a *single chance of a dye*, and doubt not of success, because their *fancy* feels so powerful an impression, and assures them it will be prosperous. A thousand *pretended prophecies* and *inspirations*, and all the *freaks of enthusiasm*, have been derived from this spring. *Dreams* are nothing else but the deceptions of fancy: A *delirium* is but a short wildness of the imagination; and a settled irregularity of fancy, is *distraction* and *madness*.

One way to gain a victory over this unruly faculty, is to set a watch upon it perpetually, and to bridle it in all its extravagancies; never to believe any thing merely because *fancy* dictates it, any more than I would believe a *midnight-dream*, nor to trust *fancy* any farther, than it is attended with *severe reason*. It is a very useful and entertaining power of human nature in matters of *illustration, persuasion, oratory, poetry, wit, conversation, &c.* but in the calm inquiry after truth, and the final judgment of things, *fancy* should retire, and stand aside, unless it be called in to explain or illustrate a difficult point by a similitude.

Another method of deliverance from these *prejudices of fancy*, is to compare the *ideas* that arise in our *imaginations* with the *real nature of things*, as often as we have occasion to judge concerning them; and let calm and sedate *reason* govern and determine our opinions, though *fancy* should shew never so great a reluctance. *Fancy* is the inferior faculty, and it ought to obey.

IV. *The various passions or affections of the mind*, are numerous and endless springs of *prejudice*. They disguise every object they converse with, and put their own colours upon it, and thus lead the judgment astray from truth. It is *love* that makes the mother think her own child the fairest, and will sometimes persuade us that a *blemish is a beauty*. *Hope* and *desire* make an hour of delay seem as long as two or three hours: *Hope* inclines us to think there is nothing too difficult to be attempted: *Despair* tells us that a brave attempt is mere rashness, and that every difficulty is unfurmoutable. *Fear* makes us imagine that a bush shaken with the wind, has some savage beast in it, and multiplies the dangers that attend our path: But still there is a more unhappy effect of *fear*, when it keeps millions of souls in slavery to the errors of an established religion: What could persuade the wise men and philosophers of a

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Popish country to believe the gross absurdities of the Romish church, but the *fear of torture, or death, the galleys, or the inquisition?* Sorrow and melancholy tempt us to think our circumstances much more dismal than they are, that we may have some excuse for mourning: And *envy* represents the condition of our neighbour better than it is, that there might be some pretence for her own vexation and uneasiness. *Anger, wrath, and revenge,* and all those hateful passions, excite in us far worse ideas of men than they deserve, and persuade us to believe all that is ill of them. A detail of the evil influence of the *affections of the mind* upon our judgment, would make a large volume.

The cure of these *prejudices* is attained by a constant jealousy of ourselves, and watchfulness over our *passions*, that they may never interpose when we are called to pass a judgment of any thing: And when our affections are warmly engaged, let us abstain from judging. It would be also of great use to us to form our deliberate judgments of persons and things in the calmest and serenest hours of life, when the *passions of nature* are all silent, and the mind enjoys its most perfect composure: And these judgments so formed should be treasured up in the mind, that we might have recourse to them in hours of need. See many more sentiments and directions relating to this subject, in my *Doctrine of the passions*. A new edition enlarged.

V. *The fondness we have for SELF,* and the relation which other persons and things have to ourselves, furnish us with another long list of *prejudices*. This indeed might be reduced to the *passion of self-love*, but it is so copious an head that I chose to name it as a distinct spring of false judgments. We are generally ready to fancy every thing of *our own* has something peculiarly valuable in it, when indeed there is no other reason, but because it is *our own*. Were we born among the gardens of Italy, the rocks of Switzerland,

Switzerland, or the ice and snows of Russia and Sweden, still we should imagine peculiar excellencies in our native land. We conceive a good idea of the *town* and *village* where we first breathed, and think the better of a man for being born near us. We entertain the best opinion of the persons of *our own party*, and easily believe evil reports of persons of a *different sect or faction*. Our *own sex*, *our kindred*, *our houses*, and *our very names*, seem to have something good and desirable in them. We are ready to mingle all these with *ourselves*, and cannot bear to have others think meanly of them.

So good an opinion have we of *our own sentiments* and *practices*, that it is very difficult to believe what a reprover says of our conduct; and we are as ready to assent to all the language of flattery. We set up *our own opinions* in religion and philosophy as the tests of *orthodoxy* and *truth*; and we are prone to judge every practice of other men either a *duty* or a *crime*, which we think would be a *crime* or a *duty* in us, though their circumstances are vastly different from our own. This humour prevails sometimes to such a degree, that we would make *our own taste* and *inclination* the standard by which to judge of every dish of meat that is set upon the table, every book in a library, every employment, study, and business of life, as well as every recreation.

It is from this evil principle of *setting up self for a model what other men ought to be*, that the antichristian spirit of imposition and persecution had its original: Though there is no more reason for it than there was for the practice of that tyrant, who having a bed fit for his own size, was reported to stretch men of low stature upon the rack, till they were drawn out to the length of his bed; and some add also, that he cut off the legs of any whom he found too long for it.

It is also from a principle near akin to this, that we pervert and strain the writings of many venerable



ble authors, and especially the sacred books of scripture, to make them speak *our own sense*. Through the influence which *our own schemes*, or *hypotheses* have upon the mind, we sometimes become so sharp-sighted as to find these schemes in those places of scripture where the holy writers never thought of them, nor the holy Spirit intended them. At other times this *prejudice* brings such a dimness upon the sight, that we cannot read any thing that opposes our own scheme, though it be written as with sunbeams, and in the plainest language; and perhaps we are in danger in such a case of *winking* a little against the light.

We ought to bring our minds free, unbiassed and teachable, to learn our religion from the word of God; but we have generally formed all the lesser as well as the greater points of our religion beforehand, and then we read the prophets and apostles only to pervert them to confirm our own opinions. Were it not for this influence of *self*, and a bigotry to our own tenets, we could hardly imagine that so many strange, absurd, inconsistent, wicked, mischievous, and bloody principles, should pretend to support and defend themselves by the *gospel of Christ*.

Every learned *critick* has *his own* hypothesis; and if the *common text* be not favourable to his opinion, a *various lection* shall be made authentick. The text must be supposed to be *defective* or *redundant*, and the sense of it shall be *literal* or *metaphorical*, according as it best supports his own scheme. Whole chapters or books shall be *added* or *left out* of the sacred canon, or be turned into *parables* by this influence. Luther knew not well how to reconcile the epistle of St. James to the doctrine of *justification by faith alone*, and so he could not allow it to be divine. The Papists bring all the apocrypha into their bible, and stamp divinity upon it; for they can fancy purgatory is there, and they find prayers for the dead. But they leave out the *second commandment*, because it forbids

*forbids the worship of images.* Others suppose the *Mosaick history of the creation, and the fall of man*, to be oriental ornaments, or a mere *allegory*, because the literal sense of those three chapters of *Genesis* do not agree with their theories. Even an honest plain-hearted and unlearned *Christian* is ready to find something in every chapter of the bible to countenance his own private sentiments; but he loves those chapters best which speak his own opinions plainest: This is a *prejudice* that sticks very close to our natures; the *scholar* is infested with it daily, and the *mechanick* is not free.

*Self* has yet a farther and a more pernicious influence upon our understandings, and is an unhappy guide in the search after truth. When *our own inclination*, or *our ease*, *our honour*, or *our profit*, tempt us to the practice of any thing of suspected lawfulness, how do we strain our thoughts to find arguments for it, and persuade ourselves it is lawful? We colour over iniquity and sinful compliance with the names of *virtue* and *innocence*, or at least of *constraint* and *necessity*. All the different and opposite sentiments and practices of mankind are too much influenced by this mean bribery, and give too just occasion for satyrical writers to say, that *self-interest governs all mankind*.

When the *judge* had awarded due damages to a person into whose field a neighbour's oxen had broke, it is reported that he reversed his own sentence, when he heard that the oxen which had done this mischief were *his own*. Whether this be a *history* or a *parable*, it is still a just representation of the wretched influence of *self* to corrupt the judgment.

One way to amend this *prejudice*, is to thrust *self* so far out of the question that it may have no manner of influence whensoever we are called to judge and consider the naked nature, truth, and justice of things. In matters of equity between man and man, our Saviour has taught us an effectual means  
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of guarding against this prejudice, and that is, to put *my neighbour* in the place of *myself*, and *myself* in the place of *my neighbour*, rather than be bribed by this corrupt principle of *self-love* to do injury to our neighbours. Thence arises that golden rule of *dealing with others as we would have others deal with us*.

In the judgment of *truth* and *falsehood*, *right* and *wrong*, *good* and *evil*, we ought to consider that every man has a SELF as well as we; and that the tastes, passions, inclinations, and interests of different men are very different, and often contrary, and that they dictate contrary things: Unless therefore all manner of different and contrary propositions can be true at once, *self* can never be a just test or standard of *truth* and *falsehood*, *good* and *evil*.

VI. *The tempers, humours, and peculiar turns of the mind*, whether they be natural or acquired, have a great influence upon our judgment, and become the occasion of many *mistakes*. Let us survey a few of them.

(1.) Some persons are of an *easy* and *credulous temper*, while others are perpetually discovering a *spirit of contradiction*.

The *credulous man* is ready to receive every thing for truth, that has but a shadow of evidence; every new book that he reads, and every ingenious man with whom he converses, has power enough to draw him into the sentiments of the speaker or writer. He has so much complaisance in him, or weakness of soul, that he is ready to resign his own opinion to the first objection which he hears, and to receive any sentiments of another that are asserted with a positive air and much assurance. Thus he is under a kind of necessity, through the indulgence of this credulous humour, either to be often changing his opinions, or to believe inconsistencies.

The *man of contradiction* is of a contrary humour, for he stands ready to oppose every thing that is said: He gives but a slight attention to the reasons of other

men, from an inward and scornful presumption that they have no strength in them. When he reads or hears a discourse different from his own sentiments, he does not give himself leave to consider whether that discourse may be true; but employs all his powers immediately to confute it. Your *great disputers*, and your *men of controversy*, are in continual danger of this sort of prejudice: They contend often for victory, and will maintain whatsoever they have asserted, while truth is lost in the noise and tumult of reciprocal contradictions; and it frequently happens, that a *debate about opinions* is turned into a *mutual reproach of persons*.

The *prejudice of credulity* may in some measure be cured, by learning to set a high value on truth, and by taking more pains to attain it; remembering that truth oftentimes lies dark and deep, and requires us to dig for it as hid treasure; and that falsehood often puts on a fair disguise, and therefore we should not yield up our judgment to every plausible appearance. It is no part of civility or good breeding to part with truth, but to maintain it with *decency* and *candour*.

A *spirit of contradiction* is so pedantick and hateful, that a man should take much pains with himself to watch against every instance of it: He should learn so much *good humour*, at least, as never to oppose any thing without just and solid reason for it: He should abate some degrees of *pride* and *moroseness*, which are never-failing ingredients in this sort of temper, and should seek after so much *honesty* and *conscience* as never to contend for conquest or triumph; but to review his own reasons, and to read the arguments of his opponents (if possible) with an equal indifferency, and be glad to spy truth, and to submit to it, though it appear on the opposite side.

(2) There is another pair of *prejudices* derived from *two tempers* of mind, near akin to those I have just now mentioned; and these are the *dogmatical* and

and the *sceptical humour*, that is, always *positive*, or always *doubting*.

By what means soever the dogmatist came by his opinions, whether by his senses or by his fancy, his education or his own reading, yet he believes them all with the same assurance that he does a *mathematical truth*; he has scarce any mere *probabilities* that belong to him; every thing with him is *certain* and *infallible*; every punctilio in religion is an article of his faith, and he answers all manner of objections by a sovereign contempt.

Persons of this temper are seldom to be convinced of any mistake: A full assurance of their own notions makes all the difficulties on their own side vanish so intirely, that they think every point of their belief is written as with sun-beams, and wonder any one should find a difficulty in it. They are amazed that learned men should make a controversy of what is to them so perspicuous and indubitable. The lowest rank of people, both in learned and in vulgar life, is very subject to this obstinacy.

*Scepticism* is a contrary prejudice. The dogmatist is sure of every thing, and the *sceptick* believes nothing. Perhaps he has found himself often mistaken in matters of which he thought himself well assured in his younger days, and therefore he is afraid to give his assent to any thing again. He sees so much shew of reason for every opinion, and so many objections also arising against every doctrine, that he is ready to throw off the belief of every thing: He renounces at once the pursuit of truth, and contents himself to say, *There is nothing certain*. It is well, if through the influence of such a temper he does not cast away his religion as well as his philosophy, and abandon himself to a profane course of life, regardless of hell or heaven.

Both these *prejudices* last mentioned, though they are so opposite to each other, yet they arise from the same spring, and that is, *impatience of study*, and



*want of diligent attention in the search of truth.* The dogmatist is in haste to believe something; he cannot keep himself long enough in suspense, till some bright and convincing evidence appear on one side, but throws himself casually into the sentiments of one party or another, and then he will hear no argument to the contrary. The sceptick will not take pains to search things to the bottom, but when he sees difficulties on both sides, resolves to believe neither of them. *Humility of soul, patience in study, diligence in inquiry, with an honest zeal for truth,* would go a great way towards the cure of both these follies.

(3.) Another sort of *temper* that is very injurious to a right judgment of things, is an *inconstant, fickle, changeable spirit*, and a very *uneven temper of mind*. When such persons are in one humour, they pass a judgment of things agreeable to it; when their humour changes, they reverse their first judgment, and embrace a new opinion. They have no *steadiness of soul*; they want *firmness of mind* sufficient to establish themselves in any truth, and are ready to change it for the next alluring falsehood that is agreeable to their change of humour. This *fickleness* is sometimes so mingled with their very constitution by nature, or by distemper of body, that a *cloudy day* and a *lowring sky* shall strongly incline them to form an opinion both of themselves, and of persons and things round about them, quite different from what they believe when the *sun shines*, and the *heavens are serene*.

This sort of people ought to judge of things and persons in their most sedate, peaceful, and composed hours of life, and reserve these judgments for their conduct at more unhappy seasons.

(4.) Some persons have a *violent and turgid manner both of talking and thinking*; whatsoever they judge of, it is always with a tincture of this vanity. They are always in extremes, and pronounce concerning every thing in the superlative. If they think a man  
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to be learned, *he is the chief scholar of the age*; If another has low parts, *he is the greatest blockhead in nature*: If they approve any book on divine subjects, *it is the best book in the world next to the bible*: If they speak of a storm of rain or hail, *it is the most terrible storm that fell since the creation*: And a cold winter day is the *coldest that ever was known*.

But the men of this swelling language ought to remember, that nature has ten thousand *moderate* things in it, and does not always deal in *extremes* as they do.

(5.) I think it may be called another sort of *prejudice derived from humour*, when some men believe a *doctrine merely because it is antient*, and has been long believed; others are so fond of *novelty*, that nothing prevails upon their assent so much as *new thoughts and new notions*. Again, there are some who set a high esteem upon every thing that is *foreign and far-fetched*; therefore *China pictures* are admired, how awkward soever: Others value things the more for being of our own *native growth, invention, or manufacture*, and these as much despise *foreign things*.

Some *men of letters and theology* will not believe a proposition even concerning a sublime subject, till every thing mysterious, deep and difficult is cut off from it, though the scripture asserts it never so plainly; others are so fond of a *mystery* and things *incomprehensible*, that they would scarce believe the doctrine of the *Trinity*, if it could be explained; they incline to that foolish rant of one of the antients, *Credo quia impossibile est*; "I believe it because it is impossible."

To cure these mistakes, remember that neither *antique nor novel, foreign nor native, mysterious nor plain*, are certain characters either of truth or falsehood.

I might mention various other *humours of men* that excite in them various *prejudices*, and lead them

into rash and mistaken judgments; but these are sufficient for a specimen.

VII. There are several other *weaknesses* which belong to human nature, whereby we are led into *mistakes*, and indeed are rendered almost incapable of passing a solid judgment in matters of great depth and difficulty. Some have a *native obscurity of perception*, (or shall I call it a want of *natural sagacity*?) whereby they are hindered from attaining clear and distinct ideas. Their thoughts always seem to have something confused and cloudy in them, and therefore they judge in the dark. Some have a *defect of memory*, and then they are not capable of comparing their present ideas with a great variety of others, in order to secure themselves from inconsistency in judgment. Others may have a memory large enough, yet they are subject to the same errors from a *narrowness of soul*, and such a *fixation and confinement of thought to a few objects*, that they scarce ever take a survey of things wide enough to judge wisely and well, and to secure themselves from all inconsistencies.

Though these are *natural defects* and *weaknesses*, yet they may in some measure be relieved by labour, diligence, and a due attention to proper rules.

But among all the *causes of false judgment which are within ourselves*, I ought by no means to leave out that *universal and original spring of error*, which we are informed of by the word of God; and that is, *the sin and defection of our first parents*; whereby all our best natural powers both of mind and body are impaired, and rendered very much inferior to what they were in a state of innocence. Our understanding is darkened, our memory contracted, our corrupt humours and passions are grown predominant, our reason enfeebled, and various disorders attend our constitution and animal nature, whereby the mind is strangely imposed upon in its judgment of things. Nor is there any perfect relief

relief to be expected on earth. There is no hope of ever recovering from these maladies, but by a *sincere return to God* in the ways of his own appointment, whereby we shall be kept safe from all dangerous and pernicious errors in the matters of religion; and though *imperfections* and *mistakes* will hang about us in the present life, as the effects of our *original apostasy* from God, yet we hope for a full deliverance from them when we arrive at heaven.

## S E C T. IV.

*Prejudices arising from other Persons.*

WERE it not for the *springs of prejudice that are lurking in ourselves*, we should not be subject to so many mistakes from the *influence of others*: But since our nature is so susceptible of errors on all sides, it is fit we should have hints and notices given us, how far *other persons* may have power over us, and become the causes of all our false judgments. This might also be cast into one heap, for they are all near akin, and mingle with each other; but for distinction-sake let them be called the *prejudices of education*, of *custom*, of *authority*, and such as arise from the *manner of proposal*.

I. Those with whom *our education* is intrusted may lay the *first foundation of many mistakes* in our younger years. How many fooleries and errors are instilled into us by our nurses, our fellow-children; by servants or unskilled teachers; which are not only maintained through the following parts of life, but sometimes have a very unhappy influence upon us! We are taught that *there are bugbears and goblins in the dark*; our young minds are crouded with the terrible ideas of *ghosts appearing upon every occasion*, or with the pleasanter tales of *fairies dancing at midnight*. We learn to *prophecy betimes*, to *foretel futu-*  
*rities*

rities by good or evil omens, and to presage approaching death in a family by ravens and little worms, which we therefore call a death-watch. We are taught to know beforehand, for a twelvemonth together, which days of the week will be fair or foul, which will be lucky or unlucky; nor is there any thing so silly, but may be imposed upon our understandings in that early part of life; and these ridiculous stories abide with us too long, and too far influence the weaker part of mankind.

We choose our particular set and party in the civil, the religious, and the learned life, by the influence of education. In the colleges of learning, some are for the *nominals*, and some for the *realists*, in the science of metaphysics, because their tutors were devoted to these parties. The *old philosophy* and the *new* have gained thousands of partisans the same way: And every religion has its *infant votaries*, who are born, live and die in the same faith, without examination of any article. The Turks are taught early to believe in Mahomet; the Jews in Moses; the heathens worship a *multitude of gods*, under the force of their education. And it would be well if there were not millions of *Christians*, who have little more to say for their religion, than that they were born and bred up in it. The greatest part of the *Christian world* can hardly give any reason why they believe the *Bible to be the word of God*, but because they have always believed it, and they were taught so from their infancy. As Jews and Turks, and American Heathens, believe the most monstrous and incredible stories, because they have been trained up amongst them, as articles of faith; so the Papists believe their *transubstantiation*, and make no difficulty of assenting to *impossibilities*, since it is the current doctrine of their catechisms. By the same means the several sects and parties in Christianity, believe all the *strained interpretations of scripture*, by which they have been taught to support their own tenets;



tenets: They find nothing difficult in all the *absurd glosses* and *far-fetched senses*, that are sometimes put upon the words of the sacred writers, because their ears have been always accustomed to these glosses; and therefore they sit so smooth and easy upon their understandings, that they know not how to admit the most natural and easy interpretation in opposition to them.

In the same manner we are nursed up in many silly and gross mistakes about *domestick* affairs, as well as in matters of *political* concernment. It is upon the same ground that children are trained up to be *Whigs* and *Tories* betimes; and every one learns the distinguishing terms of his own party, as the *Papists* learn to say their prayers in *Latin*, without any meaning, reason, or devotion.

This sort of *prejudice* must be cured by calling all the principles of our young years to the bar of more mature reason, that we may judge of the things of *nature* and *political affairs* by juster rules of philosophy and observation: And even the *matters of religion* must be first inquired into by *reason* and *conscience*, and when these have led us to believe *scripture to be the word of God*, then that becomes our sovereign guide, and reason and conscience must submit to receive its dictates.

II. The next *prejudice* which I shall mention, is that which arises from the *custom* or *fashion* of those amongst whom we live. Suppose we have freed ourselves from the younger *prejudices of our education*, yet we are in danger of having our mind turned aside from truth by the influence of *general custom*.

Our opinion of *meats* and *drinks*, of *garments* and *forms of salutation*, are influenced much more by *custom*, than by the eye, the ear, or the taste. Custom prevails even over *sense* itself, and therefore no wonder if it prevail over *reason* too. What is it but *custom* that renders many of the *mixtures of food*

*food and sauces* elegant in Britain, which would be awkward and nauseous to the inhabitants of China, and indeed were nauseous to us when we first tasted them? What but *custom* could make those *salutations* polite in Muscovy, which are ridiculous in France or England? We call ourselves indeed the *politer nations*, but it is we who judge thus of ourselves; and that fancied *politeness* is oftentimes more owing to *custom* than *reason*. Why are the forms of our *present garments* counted beautiful, and those fashions of our ancestors the matter of scoff and contempt, which in their day were all decent and genteel? It is *custom* that forms our opinion of *dress*, and reconciles by degrees to those habits which at first seemed very odd and monstrous. It must be granted, there are some garments and habits which have a *natural congruity* or *incongruity*, *modesty* or *immodesty*, *decency* or *indecency*, *gaudery* or *gravity*; though for the most part there is but little of *reason* in these affairs: But what little there is of *reason* or *natural decency*, *custom* triumphs over all. It is almost impossible to persuade a gay lady that any thing can be *decent* which is out of the *fashion*: And it were well if *fashion* stretched its powers no farther than the business of drapery and the fair sex.

The methods of our *education* are governed by *custom*. It is *custom*, and not *reason*, that sends every boy to learn the Roman poets, and begin a little acquaintance with Greek, before he is bound an apprentice to a soapboiler or leather-seller. It is *custom* alone that teaches us Latin by the rules of a Latin grammar; a tedious and absurd method! And what is it but *custom* that has for past centuries confined the brightest geninsses, even of the highest rank in the female world, to the business of the needle only, and secluded them most unmercifully from the pleasure of knowledge, and the divine improvements of *reason*? But we begin to break all these chains, and *reason* begins to dictate

dictate the education of youth. May the growing age be learned and wise!

It is by the *prejudice* arising from our own *customs*, that we judge of all other *civil* and *religious forms* and *practices*. The rites and ceremonies of *war* and *peace* in other nations, the forms of *weddings* and *funerals*, the several ranks of *magistracy*, the *trades* and *employments* of both sexes, the *publick* and the *domestick affairs of life*, and almost every thing of *foreign customs*, is judged irregular. It is all imagined to be *unreasonable* or *unnatural*, by those who have no other rule to judge of *nature* and *reason*, but the customs of their own country, or the little town where they dwell. *Custom* is called a *second nature*, but we often mistake it for *nature itself*.

Besides all this, there is a fashion in *opinions*, there is a fashion in *writing* and *printing*, in *style* and *language*. In our day it is the vogue of the nation, that *parliaments may settle the succession of the crown*, and that *a people can make a king*; in the last age this was a doctrine akin to treason. *Citations from the Latin poets* were an embellishment of style in the last century, and whole pages in that day were covered with them; it is now forbidden by custom, and exposed by the name of *pedantry*; whereas in truth both these are extremes. Sometimes our printed books shall abound in capitals, and sometimes reject them all. Now we deal much in *essays*, and most unreasonably despise *systematick* learning, whereas our fathers had a just value for *regularity* and *systems*; then *folios* and *quartos* were the fashionable sizes, as volumes in *octavo* are now. We are ever ready to run into extremes, and yet custom still persuades us that *reason* and *nature* are on our side.

This business of the *fashion* has a most powerful influence on our judgments; for it employs those two strong engines of *fear* and *shame* to operate upon  
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our understandings with unhappy success. We are ashamed to believe or profess an unfashionable opinion in philosophy, and a cowardly soul dares not so much as indulge a thought contrary to the *established* or *fashionable faith*, nor act in opposition to *custom*, though it be according to the dictates of *reason*.

I confess there is a respect due to mankind, which should incline even the wisest of men to follow the *innocent* customs of their country in the outward practices of civil life, and in some measure to submit to fashion in *all indifferent affairs*, where *reason* and *scripture* make no remonstrances against it. But the judgments of the mind ought to be for ever free, and not biaſſed by the *customs* and *fashions* of any age or nation whatsoever.

To deliver our understandings from this danger and slavery, we should consider these three things.

1. That the greatest part of the *civil customs* of any particular nation or age, spring from *humour* rather than *reason*. Sometimes the humour of the prince prevails, and sometimes the humour of the people. It is either the *great* or the *many* who dictate the fashion, and these have not always the highest reason on their side.

2. Consider also, that the *customs* of the same nations in different ages, the *customs* of different nations in the same age, and the *customs* of different towns and villages in the same nation, are very various and contrary to each other. The *fashionable* learning, language, sentiments, and rules of politeness, differ greatly in *different countries* and *ages* of mankind; but *truth* and *reason* are of a more uniform and steady nature, and do not change with the fashion. Upon this account, to cure the *prepossessions* which arise from *custom*, it is of excellent use to travel, and see the customs of various countries, and to read the travels of other men,  
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and the history of past ages, that every thing may not seem strange and uncouth which is not practised within the limits of our own parish, or in the narrow space of our own life-time.

3. Consider yet again, how often we ourselves have changed our own opinions concerning the decency, propriety, or congruity of several *modes*, or *practices* in the world, especially if we have lived to the age of thirty or forty. *Custom* or *fashion*, even in all its changes, has been ready to have some degree of ascendancy over our understandings, and what at one time seemed *decent*, appears *obsolete* and *disagreeable* afterward, when the fashion changes. Let us learn therefore to abstract as much as possible from *custom* and *fashion*, when we would pass a judgment concerning the real value and intrinsic nature of things.

III The *authority* of men, is the spring of another rank of *prejudices*.

Among these, the *authority* of our *forefathers* and ancient *authors* is most remarkable. We pay deference to the opinion of others, merely because they lived a thousand years before us; and even the trifles and impertinencies that have a mark of *antiquity* upon them, are revered for this reason, because they came from the *ancients*.

It is granted, that the *ancients* had many wise and great men among them, and some of their writings, which time hath delivered down to us, are truly valuable: But those writers lived rather in the infant-state of the world; and the *philosophers*, as well as the *polite authors* of our age, are properly the *elders*, who have seen the mistakes of the younger ages of mankind, and corrected them by observation and experience.

Some borrow all their religion from the *fathers* of the *Christian church*, or from their *synods* or *councils*; but he that will read Monsieur Daille on the *use of the fathers*, will find many reasons why they



are by no means fit to dictate our faith, since we have the gospel of Christ, and the writings of the apostles and prophets in our own hands.

Some persons believe every thing that their *kindred*, their *parents*, and their *tutors* believe. The veneration and the love which they have for their *ancestors*, incline them to swallow down all their opinions at once, without examining what truth or falshood there is in them. Men take up their principles by inheritance, and defend them as they would their estates, because they are born heirs to them. I freely grant, that *parents* are appointed by God and nature to teach us all the sentiments and practices of our younger years; and happy are those whose parents lead them into the paths of wisdom and truth! I grant farther, that when persons come to years of discretion, and judge for themselves, they ought to examine the *opinions of their parents*, with the greatest modesty, and with an humble deference to their superior character; they ought, in matters perfectly dubious, to give the preference to their parents advice, and always to pay them the first respect, nor ever depart from their opinions and practice, till reason and conscience make it necessary. But after all, it is possible that parents may be mistaken, and therefore *reason* and *scripture* ought to be our final rules of determination in matters that relate to this world, and that which is to come.

Sometimes a *favourite author*, or a *writer of great name*, drags a thousand followers after him into his own mistakes, merely by the authority of his name and character. The sentiments of Aristotle were imbibed and maintained by all the schools in Europe for several centuries; and a citation from his writings was thought a sufficient proof of any proposition. The great Descartes had also too many implicit believers in the last age, though he himself, in his philosophy, disclaims all such influence over the

the minds of his readers. Calvin and Luther, in the days of *reformation* from *Popery*, were learned and pious men, and there have been a succession of their disciples even to this day, who pay too much reverence to the words of their masters. There are others who renounce their authority, but give themselves up in too servile a manner to the opinion and authority of other masters, and follow as bad or worse guides in religion.

If only *learned*, and *wise*, and *good* men had influence on the sentiments of others, it would be at least a more excusable sort of prejudice, and there would be some colour of shadow and reason for it: But that *riches*, *honours*, and *outward splendor*, should set up persons for dictators to all the rest of mankind; this is a most shameful invasion of the right of our understanding on the one hand, and as shameful a slavery of the soul on the other. The *poor man*, or the *labourer*, too often believes such a principle in *politicks*, or in *morality*, and judges concerning the *rights of the king and the people*, just as his *wealthy neighbour* does. Half the parish follows the opinion of the *esquire*, and the tenants of a manor fall into the sentiments of their *lord*, especially if he lives amongst them. How unreasonable, and yet how common is this!

As for the principles of *religion*, we frequently find how they are taken up and forsaken, changed and resumed by the influences of *princes*. In all nations the *priests* have much power also in dictating the religion of the *people*, but the *princes* dictate to them: And where there is a great pomp and grandeur attending the priesthood in any religion whatsoever, with so much the more reverence and stronger faith do the people believe whatever they teach them: Yet it is too often evident, that *riches*, and *dominions*, and *high titles*, in *church* or *state*, have no manner of pretence to truth and certainty, wisdom and goodness, above the rest of mortals, be-

cause these superiorities in this world are not always conferred according to merit.

I confess, where a man of *wisdom* and *years*, of *observation* and *experience*, gives us his opinion and advice in matters of the *civil* or the *moral* life; Reason tells us we should pay a great attention to him, and it is probable he may be in the right. Where a man of *long exercise* in *piety* speaks of *practical religion*, there is a due deference to be paid to his sentiments: And the same we may say concerning an *ingenious man long versed in any art or science*, he may justly expect due regard when he speaks of his own affairs and proper business. But in *other things* each of these may be ignorant enough, notwithstanding all their piety and years, and particular skill: Nor even in their *own proper province* are they to be believed in every thing without reserve, and without examination.

To free ourselves from these *prejudices*, it is sufficient to remember, that there is no rank or character among mankind, which has any just pretence to sway the judgments of other men by their authority: For there have been persons of the same rank and character who have maintained different and contrary sentiments; but all these can never be true, and therefore the mere name or reputation that any of them possesses, is not a sufficient evidence of truth.

Shall we believe the *ancients in philosophy*? But some of the ancients were *Stoics*, some *Peripatetics*, some *Platonics*, and some *Epicureans*, some *Cynics*, and some *Sceptics*. Shall we judge of matters of the *Christian faith* by the *fathers*, or *primitive writers* for three or four hundred years after *Christ*? But they often contradicted one another, and themselves too; and what is worse, they sometimes contradicted the scripture itself. Now among all these different and contrary sentiments in *philosophy* and *religion*,

*religion*, which of the ancients must we believe, for we cannot believe them all?

Again, To believe in all things as our predecessors did, is the ready way to keep mankind in an everlasting state of infancy, and to lay an eternal bar against all the improvements of our reason and our happiness. Had the present age of philosophers satisfied themselves with the *substantial forms* and *occult qualities* of Aristotle, with the *solid spheres*, *eccentrics*, and *epicycles* of Ptolemy, and the ancient astronomers; then the great Lord Bacon, Copernicus, and Descartes, with the greater Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. Locke, and Mr. Boyle, had risen in our world in vain. We must have blundered on still in successive generations amongst absurdities and thick darkness, and a hundred useful inventions for the happiness of human life had never been known.

Thus it is in the matters of *philosophy* and *science*. But, you will say, *shall not our own ancestors determine our judgment in matters of civil or religious concernment?* If they must, then the child of a *Heathen* must believe that *Heathenism* is truth; the son of a *Papist* must assent to all the absurdities of *Popery*; the posterity of the *Jews* and *Socinians* must for ever be *Socinians* and *Jews*; and a man whose father was of *Republican* principles, must make a succession of *Republicans* in his family to the end of the world. If we ought always to believe whatsoever our *parents*, or our *priests*, or our *princes* believe, the inhabitants of China ought to worship their own idols, and the savages of Africa ought to believe all the nonsense, and practise the idolatry of their *Negro fathers and kings*. The British nation, when it was *Heathen*, could never have become *Christian*; and when it was a slave to Rome, it could never have been *reformed*.

Besides, let us consider, that the great God, our common Maker, has never given one man's under-

standing a legal and rightful sovereignty to determine truths for others, at least after they are past the state of childhood or minority. No single person, how learned and wise, and great soever, or whatsoever *natural*, or *civil*, or *ecclesiastical* relation he may have to us, can claim this dominion over our faith. St Paul the apostle, in his private capacity, would not do it; nor hath an inspired man any such authority, until he makes his divine commission appear. Our Saviour himself tells the Jews, that *if he had not done such wondrous works among them, they had not sinned in disbelieving his doctrines, and refusing him for the Messiah*. No bishop or presbyter, no synod or council, no church or assembly of men, since the days of inspiration, hath power derived to them from God, to make creeds or articles of faith for us, and impose them upon our understandings. We must all act according to the best of our own light, and the judgment of our own consciences, using the best advantages which providence hath given us, with an honest and impartial diligence to enquire and search out the truth: *For every one of us must give an account of himself to God*. To believe as the church, or the court believes, is but a sorry and a dangerous faith: This principle would make more *Heathens* than *Christians*, and more *Papists* than *Protestants*; and perhaps lead more souls to *hell* than to *heaven*; for our Saviour himself hath plainly told us, that *if the blind will be led by the blind, they must both fall into the ditch*.

Though there be so much danger of error arising from the three *prejudices* last mentioned, yet before I dismiss this head, I think it proper to take notice, that as *education*, *custom*, and *authority*, are no sure *evidences of truth*, so neither are they certain *marks of falshood*; for reason and scripture may join to dictate the same things which our parents, our nurses, our tutors, our friends, and our country, believe and profess. Yet there appears some-

times;



times in our age, a *pride*, and *pétulance* in youth, zealous to cast off the sentiments of their *fathers* and *teachers*, on purpose to shew that they carry none of the *prejudices* of *education* and *authority* about them. They indulge all manner of licentious opinions and practices, from a vain pretence of asserting their liberty. But alas! This is but changing one *prejudice* for another; and sometimes it happens by this means, that they make a sacrifice both of truth and virtue to the vile *prejudices* of their *pride* and *sensuality*.

IV. There is another tribe of *prejudices* which are near akin to those of *authority*, and that is, when we receive a doctrine because of the *manner in which it is proposed to us by others*. I have already mentioned the powerful influence that *oratory* and *fine words* have to insinuate a false opinion, and sometimes truth is refused, and suffers contempt in the lips of a wise man, for want of the charms of language: But there are several other *manners of proposal*, whereby mistaken sentiments are powerfully conveyed into the mind.

Some persons are easily persuaded to believe what another dictates with a *positive air*, and a *great degree of assurance*: They feel the overbearing force of a confident dictator, especially if he be of a superior rank or character to themselves.

Some are quickly convinced of the truth of any doctrine, when he that proposes it puts on all the *airs of piety*, and makes *solemn appeals to heaven*, and *protestations of the truth of it*: The pious mind of a weaker Christian is ready to receive any thing that is pronounced with such an awful solemnity.

It is a *prejudice* near akin to this, when an humble soul is frightened into any particular sentiments of religion, because a man of great name or character pronounces *heresy* upon the contrary sentiments, casts the disbeliever out of the church, and forbids him the gates of heaven.

Others are allured into particular opinions by *gentler practices* on the understanding: Not only the soft tempers of mankind, but even hardy and rugged souls, are sometimes led captives to error by the *soft air of address*, and the *sweet and engaging methods of persuasion and kindness*.

I grant, where natural or revealed religion plainly dictate to us the infinite and everlasting importance of any sacred doctrine, it cannot be improper to use any of these methods, to persuade men to receive and obey the truth, after we have given sufficient reason and argument to convince their understandings. Yet all these methods, considered in themselves, have been often used to convey falshood into the soul as well as truth; and if we build our faith merely upon these foundations, without regard to the evidence of truth, and the strength of argument, our belief is but the *effect of prejudice*: For neither the *positive*, the *awful* or *solemn*, the *terrible* or the *gentle* methods of address, carry any certain evidence with them that truth lies on that side.

There is another *manner of proposing* our own opinion, or rather *opposing* the opinions of others, which demands a mention here, and that is when persons make a *jest* serve instead of an argument; when they refute what they call *error*, by a *turn of wit*, and answer every objection against their own sentiments, by casting a *sneer* upon the objector. These *scoffers* practise with success upon weak and cowardly spirits: Such as have not been well established in religion or morality, have been laughed out of the best principles by a *confident buffoon*; they have yielded up their opinions to a *witty banterer*, and sold their faith and religion for a *jest*.

There is no way to cure these evils in such a degenerate world as we live in, but by learning to distinguish well between the *substance of any doctrine*, and the *manner of address*, either in proposing, attacking, or defending it; and then by setting a just  
and

and severe guard of reason and conscience over all the exercises of our judgment, resolving to yield to nothing but the convincing evidence of truth, religiously obeying the light of *reason*, in matters of *pure reason*, and the dictates of *revelation* in things that relate to our *faith*.

Thus we have taken a brief survey of some of the *infinite varieties* of *prejudice* that attend mankind on every side in the present state, and the *dangers* of *error*, or of *rash judgment*, we are perpetually exposed to in this life: This chapter shall conclude with one *remark*, and one piece of *advice*.

The *remark* is this. The same opinion, whether *false* or *true*, may be dictated by many *prejudices* at the same time; for, as I hinted before, *prejudice* may happen to dictate truth sometimes as well as error. But where two or more *prejudices* oppose one another, as it often happens, the stronger prevails and gains the assent: Yet how seldom does *reason* interpose with sufficient power to get the ascendant of them all, as it ought to do!

The *advice* follows, namely, Since we find such a swarm of *prejudices* attending us both within and without; since we feel the weakness of our reason, the frailty of our natures, and our insufficiency to guard ourselves from error upon this account, it is not at all unbecoming the character of a *logician* or a *philosopher*, together with the advice already given, to direct every person in his *search after truth* to make his daily addresses to heaven, and implore the *God of truth* to lead him into all truth, and to *ask wisdom of him who giveth liberally* to them that ask it, and *upbraideth us not* with our own follies.

Such a devout practice will be an excellent preparative for the best improvement of all the *directions* and *rules* proposed in the two following chapters.

## C H A P. IV.

*General Directions to assist us in judging aright.*

THE chief design of the art of *logick* is to assist us in forming a true judgment of things; a few proper *observations* for this end have been dropt occasionally in some of the foregoing chapters: Yet it is necessary to mention them again in this place, that we may have a more complete and simultaneous view of the *general directions*, which are necessary in order to judge aright. A multitude of advices may be framed for this purpose; the chief of them may, for order sake, be reduced to the following heads.

*Direction I.* “When we consider ourselves as philosophers, or searchers after truth, we should examine all our old opinions afresh, and inquire what was the ground of them, and whether our assent was built on just evidence; and then we should cast off all those judgments which were formed heretofore without due examination.” A man in pursuit of knowledge, should throw off all those *prejudices* which he had imbibed in times past, and guard against all the *springs of error*, mentioned in the preceding chapter, with the utmost watchfulness for time to come.

*Observe* here, That this rule of *casting away all our former prejudicate opinions and sentiments*, is not proposed to any of us to be practised at once, considered as *men of business* or *religion*, as *friends* or *neighbours*, as *fathers* or *sons*, as *magistrates*, *subjects*, or *Christians*; but merely as *philosophers* and *searchers after truth*: And though it may be well presumed that many of our judgments, both true and false, together with the practices built thereon in the natural, the civil, and the religious life, were formed without sufficient

ent evidence; yet an *universal rejection of all these* might destroy at once our present sense and practice of duty with regard to *God, ourselves, and our fellow-creatures*. Mankind would be hereby thrown into such a state of *doubting and indifference*, that it would be too long ere they recovered any principles of virtue or religion by a train of reasonings.

Besides, the common affairs of human life often demand a much speedier determination, and we must many times act upon present probabilities: The bulk of mankind have not time and leisure, and advantages sufficient to begin all their knowledge anew, and to build up every single opinion and practice afresh, upon the justest grounds of evidence.

Yet let it be *observed* also, that so far as any person is capable of forming and correcting his notions, and his rules of conduct in the natural, civil, and religious life, by the strict rules of *logick*; and so far as he hath time and capacity to review his old opinions, to re-examine all those which are any ways doubtful, and to determine nothing without just evidence, he is likely to become so much the wiser and the happier man; and, if divine grace assist him, so much the better Christian. And though this cannot be done all at once, yet it may be done by prudent steps and degrees, till our whole set of opinions and principles be in time corrected and reformed, or at least established upon juster foundations.

*Direction II.* “ Endeavour that all your ideas of those objects, concerning which you pass any judgment, be clear and distinct, complete, comprehensive, extensive, and orderly, as far as you have occasion to judge concerning them ” This is the substance of the *last* chapter of the *first* part of *logick*. The rules which direct our conceptions must be reviewed, if we would form our judgments aright. But if we will make haste to judge at all adventures, while our ideas are *dark and confused*, and very *imperfect*,



*perfect*, we shall be in danger of running into many mistakes. This is like a person who would pretend to give the sum total of a large account in *arithmetick*, without surveying all the particulars; or as a *painter*, who professes to draw a fair and distinct landskip in the twilight, when he can hardly distinguish a house from a tree.

*Observe* here, That this *direction* does not require us to gain clear, distinct, complete ideas of things in all their parts, powers, and qualities, in an *absolute sense*; for this belongs to God alone, and is impossible for us to attain: But it is expressed in a *relative* or *limited sense*; that is, our ideas should be clear, distinct, and comprehensive, &c. at least so far as *we have occasion at that time to judge concerning them*. We may form many true and certain judgments concerning God, angels, animals, men, heaven, hell, &c. by those partial and very imperfect conceptions of them to which we have attained, if we judge no farther concerning them than our conceptions reach.

We may have a clear and distinct idea of the *existence* of many things in nature, and affirm that *they do exist*, though our ideas of their *intimate essences and causes*, their *relations and manners of action*, are very confused and obscure. We may judge well concerning *several properties* of any being, though *other properties are unknown*; for perhaps we know not all the properties of any being whatsoever.

Sometimes we have clear ideas of the *absolute properties* of an object; and we may judge of them with certainty, while the *relative properties* are very obscure and unknown to us. So we may have a clear and just idea of the *area of a parallelogram*, without knowing what relation it bears to the *area of a triangle*, or a *polygon*: I may know the length of the *diameter of a circle*, without knowing what proportion it has to the *circumference*.

There are other things, whose *external relative properties*, with respect to each other, or whose *relation*

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to us we know better than their *own inward and absolute properties*, or their essential distinguishing attributes. We perceive clearly, that *fire will warm or burn us*, and *will evaporate water*; and that *water will allay our thirst*, or *quench the fire*, though we know not the *inward distinguishing particles*, or *prime essential properties* of *fire* or *water*. We may know the *King*, and *Lord Chancellor*, and affirm many things of them in their *legal characters*, though we can have but a confused idea of their *persons* or *natural features*, if we have never seen their faces. So the scripture has revealed God himself to us, as our *Creator*, *Preserver*, *Redeemer*, and *Sanctifier*, and as the *object of our worship*, in clearer ideas than it has revealed many other abstruse questions which may be raised about his own *divine essence* or *substance*, his *immensity* or *omnipresence*.

This therefore is the *general observation* in order to guide our judgments, “That we should not allow ourselves to form a judgment concerning things farther than our clear and distinct ideas reach, and then we are not in danger of error.”

But there is one considerable objection against this rule, which is necessary to be answered; and there is one just and reasonable *exception*, which is as needful to be mentioned.

The *objection* is this: May we not judge safely concerning some *total or complete ideas*, when we have a clear perception only of some *parts or properties of them*? May we not affirm, that *All that is in God is eternal*, or that *all his unknown attributes are infinite*, though we have so very imperfect an idea of *God*, *eternity*, and *infinity*? Again, May we not safely judge of *particular objects*, whose idea is obscure, by a clear idea of the *general*? May I not affirm, That *every unknown species of animals has inward springs of motion*, because I have a clear idea that these *inward springs* belong to an *animal in general*?

*Answer.* All those supposed *unknown parts, properties,*

*ties*, or *species*, are clearly and distinctly perceived to be connected with, or contained in the *known parts*, *properties*, or *general ideas*, which we suppose to be clear and distinct as far as we judge of them: And as we have no *particular* idea of those *unknown divine attributes*, or *unknown species of animals*; so there is nothing *particular* affirmed concerning them beyond what belongs to the general idea of *divine attributes* or *animals*, with which I clearly and distinctly perceive them to be connected.

It may be illustrated in this manner. Suppose a *long chain* lies before me, whose nearest links I see are iron rings, and I see them fastened to a post near me, but the most distant links lie beyond the reach of my sight, so that I know not whether they are oval or round, brass or iron: Now I may boldly affirm, the *whole length of this chain is fastened to the post*, for I have a clear idea that the nearest links are thus fastened, and a clear idea that the distinct links are connected with the nearest, if I can draw the whole chain by one link.

Or thus: If two known ideas, A and B are evidently joined, or agree, and if C unknown be included in A, and also D unknown be included in B, then I may affirm that C and D are joined and agree: For I have a clear perception of the union of the two known ideas A and B; and also a clear perception of the connection of the unknown ideas with the known. So that *clear and distinct ideas* must still abide as a general necessary qualification, in order to form a right judgment: And indeed it is upon this foot that all *ratiocination* is built, and the conclusions are thus formed, which deduce things unknown from things known.

Yet it seems to me, that there is one just *limitation* or *exception* to this *general rule of judgment*, as built on clear and distinct ideas, and it is this:

Exception. *In matters of mere testimony, whether hu-*  
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man or divine, there is not always a necessity of clear and distinct ideas of the things which are believed. Though the evidence of propositions, which are *entirely formed by ourselves*, depends on the clearness and distinctness of those ideas of which they are composed, and on our own clear perception of their agreement or disagreement, yet we may justly assent to propositions *formed by others*, when we have neither a very clear conception in ourselves of the true ideas contained in the words, nor how they agree or disagree; provided always, that we have a clear and sufficient evidence of the credibility of the persons who inform us.

Thus when we read in scripture the great doctrines of the *deity of Christ*, of the *union of the divine and human natures in him*, of the *divine agency of the blessed Spirit*, that *the Son is the brightness of the Father's glory*, that *all things were created by him and for him*, that *the Son shall give up his kingdom to the Father*, and that *God shall be all in all*; we may safely believe them: For though the ideas of these objects themselves are not sufficiently clear, distinct, and perfect, for our own minds to form these judgments or propositions concerning them, yet we have a clear and distinct perception of God's revealing them, or that they are contained in scripture; and this is sufficient evidence to determine our assent.

The same thing holds true in some measure, where *credible human testimony* assures us of some propositions, while we have no sufficient ideas of the subject and predicate of them to determine our assent. So when an honest and learned mathematician assures a ploughman that *the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles*, or that *the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the two sides*; the ploughman, who has but confused ideas of these things, may firmly and safely believe these propositions, upon

the same ground, because he has evidence of the skill and faithfulness of his informer \*.

*Direction*

\* Perhaps some may object against this representation of things, and say, that, "We cannot properly be said to *believe a proposition* any further than we ourselves have ideas under the term: Therefore if we have *no ideas* under the terms, we believe nothing but the connexion of words or sounds: and if we have but *obscure and inadequate ideas* under the terms, then we partly believe a connexion of things, and partly a connexion of sounds. But that we cannot properly be said to *believe the proposition*, for our faith can never go beyond our ideas."

Now to set this matter in a clear light, I suppose that every proposition which is proposed to my assent, is a sentence made up of terms which have some ideas under them known or unknown to me. I confess, if I believe there are no ideas at all under the terms, and there is nothing meant by them, then indeed with regard to me, it is the mere *joining of sounds*: But if, for instance, a ploughman has credible information from an honest and skilful mathematician, that an *ellipsis is made by the section of a cone*, he believes the proposition, or he believes the sentence is true, as it is made up of terms which his informant understands, though the ideas be unknown to him; that is, he believes there are some ideas which his informant has under these words which are really connected. And, I think, this may be called *believing the proposition*, for it is a belief of something more than the mere *joining of sounds*; it is a belief of the real connexion of some unknown ideas belonging to those sounds; and in this sense a man may be said to believe the truth of a proposition, which he doth not understand at all.

With more reason still may we be said to *believe a proposition* upon credible testimony, if we have some sort of ideas under the terms, though they are but partial or inadequate and obscure; such as, *Divine answers were given by Urim and Thummin*: For since it is purely upon testimony we believe the *known parts* of the ideas signified by those words to be connected, upon the same testimony we  
may



*Direction III.* “ When you have obtained as clear  
 “ and comprehensive ideas as needful, both of  
 “ the

may also believe all the *unknown parts* of the ideas signified by those words to be connected, namely, because our informant is knowing and faithful. And in this sense we may justly be said to believe a proposition of scripture *entirely*, which we understand but very *imperfectly*, because God who reveals it is knowing and faithful in perfection.

And indeed, unless this representation of the matter be allowed, there are but very few propositions in the world, even in *human things*, to which we can give an entire assent, or which we may be said either to *know*, or *believe*, because there is scarce any thing on earth of which we have an adequate, and most perfect idea. And it is evident, that in *divine things* there is scarce any thing which we could either know or believe, without this allowance : For though reason and revelation join to inform me, that *God is holy*, how exceeding inadequate are my ideas of *God*, and of his *holiness* ? Yet I may boldly and entirely assent to this whole proposition, since I am sure that every known and unknown idea signified by the term *God*, is connected with the ideas of the term *holiness*, because reason partly informs me, but especially because the divine testimony which has connected them, is certainly credible.

I might argue upon this head perhaps more forcibly from the doctrine of *God's incomprehensibility*. If we could believe nothing but what we have ideas of, it would be impossible for us to believe that *God is incomprehensible* : For this implies in it a belief that there are some unknown ideas belonging to the nature of God. Therefore we do both believe and profess that something concerning unknown ideas, when we believe and profess that *God is incomprehensible*.

I persuade myself that most of those very persons who object against my representation of things, will yet readily confess, *they believe* all the propositions in scripture, rather than declare *they do not believe several of them* : though they must acknowledge that several of them are far above their understanding, or that they have scarce any ideas of the true sense of them. And therefore where propositions

“ the subject and predicate of a proposition, then  
 “ compare those ideas of the subject and predicate  
 “ together with the utmost attention, and observe  
 “ how far they agree, and wherein they differ.”

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derived from credible testimony are made up of dark or inadequate ideas, I think it is much more proper to say *we believe them*, than that *we do not believe them*, lest we cut off a multitude of the propositions of the bible from our assent of faith.

Yet let it be observed here, that when we believe a proposition on mere testimony, of which we have no ideas at all, we can only be said to give a *general implicit assent to the truth of that proposition*, without any particular knowledge of, or *explicit assent to the special truth contained in that proposition*: And this our *implicit assent* is of very little use, unless it be to testify our belief of the knowledge and veracity of him that informs us.

As our ideas of a proposition are more or less clear and adequate, as well as just and proper, so we do explicitly assent more or less to the *particular truth* contained in that proposition. And our assent hereby becomes more or less useful for the increase of our knowledge, or the direction of our practice.

When divine testimony plainly proposes to our faith such a proposition whereof we have but obscure, doubtful, and inadequate ideas, we are bound implicitly to believe the truth of it, as expressed in those terms, in order to shew our submission to God who revealed it, as a God of perfect knowledge and veracity: But it is our duty to use all proper methods to obtain a farther and explicit knowledge of the *particular truth* contained in the proposition, if we would improve by it either in knowledge or virtue. All necessary rules of grammar and criticism should be employed to find out the very ideas that belong to those words, and which were designed by the divine speaker or writer. Though we may believe the truth of a proposition which we do not understand, yet we should endeavour to understand every proposition which we believe to be true.

Whether the proposition may be affirmed *absolutely* or *relatively*, whether in *whole* or in *part*, whether *universally* or *particularly*, and then under *what particular limitations*. Turn these ideas about in your mind, and take a view of them on all sides, just as a mason would do to see whether two hewn stones exactly suit each other in every part, and are fit to be joined in erecting a carved or fluted pillar.

Compare the *whole subject* with the *whole predicate* in their several parts: Take heed in this matter that you neither add to, nor diminish the ideas contained in the subject or in the predicate; for such an inadvertence or mistake will expose you to great error in judgment.

*Direction IV.* “ Search for evidence of truth  
“ with diligence and honesty, and be heartily ready  
“ to receive evidence, whether for the agreement  
“ or disagreement of ideas.”

*Search with diligence*; spare no labour in searching for the truth, in due proportion to the importance of the proposition. Read the best authors who have writ on that subject; consult your wise and learned friends in conversation; and be not unwilling to borrow hints toward your improvement from the meanest person, nor to receive any glimpse of light from the most unlearned. *Diligence* and *humility* is the way to thrive in the riches of the understanding, as well as in gold or silver. Search carefully for the evidence of truth, and *dig for wisdom as for hid treasure*.

*Search with a steady honesty of soul*, and a sincere impartiality, to find the truth. Watch against every temptation that might bribe your judgment, or warp it aside from truth. Do not indulge yourself to *wish any unexamined proposition were true or false*. A wish often perverts the judgment, and tempts the mind strangely to believe upon slight evidence whatsoever we wish to be true or false.

*Direction V.* “ Since the evidence of the agree-  
“ ment

“ment or disagreement of two ideas is the ground  
 “of our assent to any proposition, or the great  
 “criterion of truth; therefore we should suspend  
 “our judgment, and neither affirm nor deny till  
 “this evidence appear.”

This *direction* is different from the *second*; for though the *evidence of the agreement or disagreement of two ideas*, most times depends on the clearness and distinctness of the ideas themselves, yet it does not always arise thence. *Testimony* may be a sufficient evidence of the agreement or disagreement of two obscure ideas, as we have seen just before in the *exception* under the *second direction*. Therefore, though we are not universally and in all cases bound to suspend our judgment till our ideas of the objects themselves are clear and distinct, yet we must always suspend our judgment, and withhold our assent to, or denial of any proposition, till some *just evidence appear of its truth or falsehood*. It is an impatience of doubt and suspense, a rashness and precipitance of judgment, and hastiness to believe something on one side or the other, that plunges us into many errors.

This *direction* to delay and to suspend our assent is more particularly necessary to be observed, when such propositions offer themselves to us as are supported by *education, authority, custom, inclination, interest*, or other powerful prejudices: for our judgment is led away insensibly to believe all that they dictate; and where prejudices and dangers of error are multiplied, we should set the stricter guard upon our assent.

Yet remember the caution or limitation here which I gave under the *first direction*, namely, that this is not to be too strictly applied to matters of *daily practice*, either in human life or religion; but when we consider ourselves as *philosophers*, or *searchers after truth*, we should always withhold our assent where there is not just evidence: And as far and

as fast as we can, in a due consistence with our daily necessary duties, we should also reform and adjust all our principles and practices both in religion and the civil life, by these rules.

*Direction VI.* “ We must judge of every proposition by those proper and peculiar *mediums* or *means*, whereby the evidence of it is to be obtained, whether it be *sense, consciusness, intelligence, reason, or testimony*. All our faculties and powers are to be employed in judging of their proper objects.”

If we judge of *sounds, colours, odours, saps, the smoothness, roughness, softness, or hardness of bodies*, it must be done by the use of our *senses*: But then we must take heed that our senses are well disposed, as shall be shewn afterward.

And since our *senses* in their various exercises are in some cases liable to be deceived, and more especially when by our eyes or our ears we judge of the *figure, quantity, distance and position* of objects that are *afar off*, we ought to call our *reason* in to the assistance of our senses, and correct the errors of *one sense* by the help of *another*.

It is by the powers of *sense* and *reason* joined together, that we must judge philosophically of the *inward nature, the secret properties and powers, the causes and effects, the relations and proportions*, of a thousand corporeal objects which surround us on earth, or are placed at a distance in the heavens. If a man, on the one hand, confines himself only to *sensible experiments*, and does not exercise *reason* upon them, he may surprise himself and others with strange appearances, and learn to entertain the world with sights and shews, but will never become a philosopher: And, on the other hand, if a man imprison himself in his closet, and employ the most exquisite powers of *reason* to find out the nature of things in the corporeal world, without the use of his *senses*, and the practice of *experiments*,



ments, he will frame to himself a scheme of chimeras instead of true philosophy. Hence came the invention of *substantial forms* and *qualities*, of *materia prima* and *privation*, with all the insignificant names used by the peripatetick writers; and it was for want of more experiments that the great Descartes failed in several parts of his philosophical writings.

In the *abstracted* and *speculative* parts of the *mathematicks*, which treat of *quantity* and *number*, the faculty of *reason* must be chiefly employed to perceive the relation of *various quantities*, and draw certain and useful *conclusions*; but it wants the assistance of *sense* also to be acquainted with *lines*, *angles* and *figures*. And in *practical mathematicks* our *senses* have still greater employment.

If we would judge of the *pure properties and actions of the mind*, of the *nature of spirits*, their various *perceptions* and *powers*, we must not inquire of our eyes and our ears, nor the images or shapes laid up in the brain, but we must have recourse to our own *consciousness* of what passes within our own mind.

If we are to pass a judgment upon any thing that relates to *spirits in a state of union with animal nature*, and the mixt properties of *sensation*, *fancy*, *appetite*, *passion*, *pleasure* and *pain*, which arise thence, we must consult our own *sensations*, and the other powers which we find in ourselves considered as *men or creatures made up of a mind and an animal*, and by just reasonings deduce proper consequences, and improve our knowledge in these subjects.

If we have occasion to judge concerning *matters done in past ages*, or in *distant countries*, and where we ourselves cannot be present, the powers of *sense* and *reason*, for the most part, are not sufficient to inform us, and we must therefore have recourse to the testimony of others: And this is either *divine* or *human*.

In matters of *mere human prudence*, we shall find  
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the greatest advantage by making wise observations on our own conduct, and the conduct of others, and a survey of the events attending such conduct. Experience in this case is equal to a natural sagacity, or rather superior. A treasure of observations and experiences collected by wise men, is of admirable service here. And perhaps there is nothing in the world of this kind equal to the sacred book of *Proverbs*, even if we look on it as a mere human writing.

In questions of *natural religion*, we must exercise the faculty of *reason* which God hath given us; and since he has been pleased to afford us his word, we should confirm and improve, or correct our reasonings on this subject by the divine assistance of the Bible.

In matters of *revealed religion*, that is, *Christianity*, *Judaism*, &c. which we could never have known by the light of nature, the word of God is our only foundation and chief light; though here our *reason* must be used both to find out the true meaning of God in his word, and to derive just inferences from what God has written, as well as to judge of the credentials whereby *divine testimony* is distinguished from *mere human testimony*, or from *imposture*.

As *divine revelation* can never contradict *right reason*, for they are two great lights given us by our Creator for our conduct, so *reason* ought by no means to assume to itself a power to contradict *divine revelation*.

Though *revelation* be not contrary to *reason*, yet there are four classes wherein matters of *revelation* may be said to rise above, or go beyond our *reason*.

1. When *revelation* asserts two things of which we have clear ideas, to be joined, whose connection or agreement is not discoverable by *reason*; as when scripture informs us, that *The dead shall rise*, that *The earth shall be burnt up*, and the *Man Christ Jesus shall return from heaven*, none of these things could ever be found out or proved by *reason*.

2. Where

2. *When revelation affirms any proposition, while reason has no clear and distinct ideas of the subject or of the predicate; as, God created all things by Jesus Christ: By the Urim and Thummim God gave forth divine oracles.* The predicate of each of these propositions is to us an obscure idea, for we know not what was the peculiar agency of Jesus Christ, when God the Father created the world by him; nor have we any clear and certain conception what the Urim and Thummim were, nor how God gave answers to his people by them.

3. *When revelation, in plain and express language, declares some doctrine which our reason at present knows not with evidence and certainty, how or in what sense to reconcile to some of its own principles; as, that the child Jesus is the mighty God, Isa. ix. 6. which proposition carries a seeming opposition to the unity and spirituality of the Godhead, which are principles of reason.*

4. *When two propositions or doctrines are plainly asserted by divine revelation, which our reason at present knows not how or in what sense, with evidence and certainty, to reconcile with one another; as, The Father is the only true God. John xvii. 3. and yet Christ is over all, God blessed for ever, Rom ix 5.*

Now divine revelation having declared all these propositions, reason is bound to receive them, because it cannot prove them to be utterly inconsistent or impossible, though the ideas of them may be obscure, though we ourselves see not the rational connexion of them, and though we know not certainly how to reconcile them. In these cases reason must submit to faith; that is we are bound to believe what God asserts, and wait till he shall clear up that which seems dark and difficult, and till the mysteries of faith shall be farther explained to us, either in this world or the world to come \*, and reason itself dictates the submission.

*Direction*

\* See something more on this subject, *Direct. II.* preceding, and chap. v. sect 6.

*Direction VII.* “ It is very useful to have some  
 “ general principles of truth settled in the mind,  
 “ whose evidence is great and obvious, that they  
 “ may be always ready at hand to assist us in judg-  
 “ ing of the great variety of things which occur.  
 “ These may be called *first notions*, or *fundamental*  
 “ *principles*; for though many of them are deduced  
 “ from each other, yet most or all of them may  
 “ be called *principles* when compared with a thou-  
 “ sand other judgments which we form under the  
 “ regulation and influence of these primary pro-  
 “ positions.”

Every art and science, as well as the affairs of civil life and religion, have peculiar principles of this kind belonging to them. There are *metaphysical*, *physical*, *mathematical*, *political*, *oeconomical*, *medicinal*, *theological*, *moral* and *prudential* principles of judgment. It would be too tedious to give a specimen of them all in this place. Those which are of the most universal use to us, both as *men* and as *Christians*, may be found in the following chapter among the *rules of judgment about particular objects*.

*Direction VIII.* “ Let the degrees of your assent  
 “ to every proposition, bear an exact proportion  
 “ to the different degrees of evidence.” Remember this is one of the greatest principles of wisdom that man can arrive at in this world, and the best human security against dangerous mistakes in speculation or practice.

In the nature of things of which our knowledge is made up, there is infinite variety in their degrees of evidence. And as God hath given our minds a power to suspend their assent till the evidence be plain, so we have a power to receive things which are proposed to us with a stronger or weaker belief in infinite variety of degrees, proportionable to their evidence. I believe that *planets are inhabited*, and I believe that *the earth rolls among them yearly round the sun*; but I do not believe both these

propositions with an equal firmness of assent, because the arguments for the latter are drawn from *mathematical observations*; but the arguments for the former are but *probable conjectures* and *moral reasonings*. Yet neither do I believe either these propositions so firmly, as I do that *the earth is about twenty four thousand miles round*, because the *mathematical* proof of this is much easier, plainer and stronger. And yet farther, when I say that *the earth was created by the power of God*, I have still a more infallible assurance of this than of all the rest, because *reason* and *scripture* join to assure me of it.

*Direction IX.* “Keep your mind always open to  
 “ receive truth, and never set limits to your own  
 “ improvement. Be ready always to hear what  
 “ may be objected against your favourite opinions,  
 “ and those which have had longest possession of  
 “ your assent. And if there should be any new  
 “ and uncontrollable evidence brought against  
 “ these old or beloved sentiments, do not wink  
 “ your eyes fast against the light, but part with  
 “ any thing for the sake of truth: Remember  
 “ when you overcome an error you gain truth; the  
 “ victory is on your side, and the advantage is all  
 “ your own.”

I confess, those *grand principles of belief and practice*, which universally influence our conduct both with regard to this life and the life to come, should be supposed to be well settled in the first years of our studies; such as, *the existence and providence of God, the truth of Christianity, the authority of scripture, the great rules of morality, &c.* We should avoid a light fluttering genius, ever ready to change our foundations, and to be *carried about with every wind of doctrine*. To guard against which inconvenience, we should labour with earnest diligence and fervent prayer, that our most fundamental and important points of belief and practice, may be established upon just grounds of *reason* and *scripture*, when we  
 come



come to years of discretion, and fit to judge for ourselves in such important points. Yet since it is possible that the folly or prejudices of younger years, may have established persons in some mistaken sentiments, even in very important matters, we should always hold ourselves ready to receive any new advantage toward the correction or improvement even of our *established principles*, as well as *opinions* of lesser moment.

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## C H A P. V.

### *Special Rules to direct us in judging of particular Objects.*

**I**T would be endless to run through all those particular objects concerning which we have occasion to pass a judgment at one time or another. Things of the most frequent occurrence, of the widest extent, and of the greatest importance, are the objects and exercises of *sense*, of *reason*, and *speculation*; the matters of *morality*, *religion*, and *prudence*, of *human* and *divine testimony*, together with the *essays of reasoning upon things past and future*. Special rules relating to all these will be the subject of the following sections.

### S E C T. I.

#### *Principles and Rules of Judgment concerning the Objects of SENSE.*

**T**HOUGH our *senses* are sometimes liable to be deceived, yet when they are rightly disposed, and fitly exercised about their *proper objects*,

with the just assistance of *reason*, they give us sufficient evidence of truth.

This may be proved by an argument drawn from the *wisdom, goodness, and faithfulness of God our Creator*. It was he gave us our *senses*, and he would not make us of such a constitution as to be liable to perpetual deception, and unavoidable error, in using these faculties of sense in the best manner we are capable of, about those very things which are the proper object of them.

This may be proved also by the *ill consequences that would follow from the supposition of the contrary*. If we could have no certainty of the dictates of our senses, we could never be sure of any of the common affairs and occurrences of life. Men could not transact any of their *civil or moral* concerns with any certainty of justice; nor indeed could we eat or drink, walk or move, with safety. Our *senses* direct us in all these.

Again, the *matters of religion* depend in some measure upon the certainty of the dictates of *sense*; for *faith comes by hearing*; and it is to our senses that God appeals in *working miracles* to prove his own revelation. Now if when our eyes and ears, and other organs of sense are rightly disposed and exercised about their proper objects, they were always liable to be deceived, there could be no knowledge of the gospel, no proof of divine revelation by visions, voices, or miracles.

Our *senses* will discover things near us and round about us, which are necessary for our present state, with sufficient exactness; and things distant also, so far as they relate to our necessary use of them.

Nor is there need of any more accurate rules for the use of our senses in the judgment of all the *common affairs of life*, or even of *miraculous and divine operations*, than the vulgar part of mankind are sufficiently acquainted with by nature, and by their own daily observations.

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But if we would express these rules in a more exact manner, *how to judge by the dictates of our senses*, they should be represented thus:

1. We must take care that the *organs of our senses be rightly disposed*, and not under the power of any distemper or considerable decay; as for instance, that our *eyes* are not tinctured with the *jaundice*, when we would judge of *colours*, lest we pronounce them all *yellow*: That our *hands* are not burning in a *fever*, nor benumb'd with *frost* or the *palsy*, when we would judge of the *heat* or *coldness* of any object; That our *palate* be not vitiated by any *disease*, or by some other *improper taste*, when we would judge of the true *taste* of any solid or liquid. This direction relates to *all our senses*, but the following rules chiefly refer to our *sight*.

2. We must observe whether the *object be at a proper distance*; for if it be too near or too far off, our eyes will not sufficiently distinguish many things which are properly the objects of sight; and therefore (if possible) we must make nearer approaches to the object, or remove farther from it, till we have obtained that due distance which gives us the clearest perception.

3. We must not employ our sight to take a full survey at once of *objects that are too large for it*; but we must view them by parts, and then judge of the whole: Nor must our senses judge of *objects too small*, for some things which appear through glasses to be really and distinctly existent, are either utterly invisible, or greatly confused, when we would judge of them by the naked eye.

4. We must place *ourselves* in such a *position toward the object*, or place the *object* in such a *position toward our eye*, as may give us the clearest representation of it; for a different position greatly alters the appearance of the shape of bodies. And for this reason we should change the *position* both of the *eye* and the *object* in some cases, that by viewing the ob-

ject in several appearances, we may pass a more compleat and certain judgment concerning it.

5. We must consider what the *medium is by which objects are represented* to our senses; whether it be thinner or thicker; whether it be air or vapour, or water, or glass, &c. whether it be duly enlightened or dusky; whether it reflect or refract, or only transmit the appearance of the object; and whether it be tinged with any particular colour: Whether it be moving or at rest.

6. We must sometimes use *other helps* to assist our senses; and if we make use of *glasses*, we must make all just allowances for the thickness or thinness of them, for the clearness or dulness, for the smoothness or roughness, for the plainness, the convexity or concavity of them, and for the distance at which these *glasses* are placed from the eye, or from the object, (or from one another, if there be two or more glasses used) and all this according to the rules of art. The same sort of caution should be used also in *mediums* which assist the hearing, such as *speaking-trumpets*, *hearing-trumpets*, &c.

7. If the object may be proposed to *more senses than one*, let us call in the assistance of some other senses to examine it, and this will encrease the evidence of what one sense dictates. For example, Our *ear* may assist our *eye* in judging of the distance of bodies, which are both visible and sonorous, as an *exploded cannon*, or a *cloud charged with thunder*. Our *feeling* may assist our *sight* in judging of the kind, the shape, situation, or distance of bodies that are near at hand, as whether a *garment* be *silk* or *stuff*, &c. So if I both *see*, *hear*, and *embrace my friend*, I am sure he is present.

8. We should also make *several trials*, at some distant times, and in different circumstances, comparing former experiments with later, and our own observations with those of other persons.

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It is by such methods as these that *modern philosophy* has been so greatly improved by the use of *sensible experiments*.

## S E C T. II.

### *Principles and Rules of Judgment in Matters of* REASON and SPECULATION.

**I**T is by *reason* we judge both in matters of *speculation* and *practice*; there are peculiar *rules* which relate to things *practical*, whether they be matters of *religion*, *morality* or *prudence*; yet many things in this section may be applied to *practical* inquiries and matters of *faith*, though it chiefly relates to *knowledge*, or *speculations* of reason.

1. Whatsoever clear ideas we can join together without inconsistency, are to be counted *possible*, because almighty power can make whatsoever we can conceive.

2. From the mere *possibility* of a thing we cannot infer its *actual existence*; nor from the *non-existence* of it can we infer its *impossibility*.

*Note*, The idea of *God* seems to claim an exemption from this general rule; for if he be *possible*, he certainly exists, because the very idea includes *eternity*; and he cannot *begin* to be: If he exist not, he is *impossible*, for the very same reason.

3. Whatsoever is evidently contained in the idea of any thing, may be affirmed of that thing with certainty. *Reason* is contained in the idea of a man; and *existence* is contained in the idea of *God*; and therefore we may affirm *God exists*, and *man is reasonable*.

4. It is impossible that the same thing should be, and not be at the same time, and in the same respect. Thence it follows, that two *contradictory ideas* cannot be joined in the same part of the same subject, at the same time,



*time, and in the same respects: Or, that two contradictory propositions can never be both true.*

5. The more we converse with any subject in its *various properties*, the better knowledge of it we are likely to attain; and by frequent and repeated inquiries and experiments, reasonings and conversations about it, we confirm our true judgments of that thing, and correct our former mistakes.

6. Yet after our utmost inquiries, we can never be assured by reason, that we know all the *powers and properties* of any *finite being*.

7. If *finite* beings are not adequately known by us, much less the things *infinite*: For it is of the nature of a *finite mind* not to be able to comprehend what is *infinite*.

8. We may judge and argue very justly and certainly concerning *infinities*, in some parts of them, or so far as our ideas reach, though the *infinity* of them hath something incomprehensible in it. And this is built on the general rule following, namely,

9. Whatsoever is sufficiently clear and evident, ought not to be denied, though there are other things belonging to the same subject, which cannot be comprehended. I may affirm many things with certainty concerning *human souls, their union with bodies*, concerning the divisibility of *matter*, and the *attributes of God*, though many other things relating to them are all darkness to us.

10. If any opinion proposed has either no *arguments*, or *equal arguments* for and against it, we must remain in perfect suspense about it, till convincing evidence appear on one side.

11. Where present necessity of action does not constrain us to determine, we should not immediately yield up our assent to mere *probable* arguments, without a due reserve, if we have any reasonable hope of obtaining greater light and evidence on one side or the other: For when the balance of the judgment once resigns its equilibrium or neutrality to a  
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mere *probable* argument, it is too ready to settle itself on that side, so that the mind will not easily change that judgment, though bright and strong evidence appear afterwards on the other side.

12. Of two opinions, if one has unanswerable difficulties attending it, we must not reject it immediately, till we examine whether the contrary opinion has not *difficulties as unanswerable*.

13. If each opinion has *objections* against it, which we cannot answer, or reconcile, we should rather embrace that which has the least difficulties in it, and which has the best arguments to support it: And let our assent bear proportion to the superior evidence.

14. If any doctrine hath very strong and sufficient *light and evidence* to command our assent, we should not reject it because there is an objection or two against it which we are not able to answer; for upon this foot a common Christian would be baffled out of every *article of his faith*, and must renounce even the dictates of his *reason and his senses*; and the most learned man perhaps would hold but very few of them fast: For some objections which attend the sacred doctrine of the *eternity* and the *omnipresence of God*, and the philosophical doctrines of *light, atoms, space, motion, &c.* are hardly solvable to this day.

15. Where two extremes are proposed, either in matters of speculation or practice, and neither of them has *certain and convincing evidence*, it is generally safest to take the middle way. *Moderation is more likely to come near the truth than doubtful extremes*. This is an excellent rule to judge of the characters and value of the greatest part of *persons and things*; for nature seldom deals in *superlatives*. It is a good rule also by which to form our judgment in many speculative controversies; a reconciling medium in such cases does often best secure truth as well as peace.

16. When two different propositions have each a very strong and cogent evidence, and do not plainly

ly appear inconsistent, we may believe both of them, though we cannot at present see the way to reconcile them. *Reason*, as well as our own *consciousness*, assure us, that the *will of man is free*, and that *multitudes of human actions are in that respect contingent*; and yet *reason* and *scripture* assure us, that *God foreknows them all*, and this implies a *certain fatality*. Now, though learned men have not to this day hit on any so clear and happy method as is desired to reconcile these propositions, yet since we do not see a plain inconsistency in them, we justly believe them both, because their evidence is great.

17. Let us not therefore too suddenly determine in difficult matters, that two things are *utterly inconsistent*: For there are many propositions which may appear *inconsistent* at first, and yet afterwards we find their *consistency*, and the way of reconciling them may be made plain and easy: As also, there are other propositions which may appear *consistent* at first, but after due examination we find their *inconsistency*.

18. For the same reason we should not call those difficulties *utterly insolvable*, or those objections *unanswerable*, which we are not presently able to answer: Time and diligence may give farther light.

19. In short, if we will secure ourselves from error, we should not be too frequent or hasty in asserting the certain *consistency* or *inconsistency*, the absolute *universality*, *necessity*, or *impossibility* of things, where there is not the brightest evidence. He is but a young and raw philosopher, who, when he sees two *particular ideas evidently agree*, immediately asserts them to agree *universally*, to agree *necessarily*, and that it is *impossible it should be otherwise*. Or when he sees evidently that two *particular ideas* happen to *disagree*, he presently asserts their constant and *natural inconsistency*, their *utter impossibility* of agreement, and calls every thing contrary to his opinion *absurdity* and *nonsense*. A true philosopher will affirm or deny with much caution and modesty, unless he has thoroughly

thoroughly examined and found the evidence of every part of his assertion exceeding plain.

20. Let us have a care of building our assurance of any *important* point of doctrine upon *one single argument*, if there are more to be obtained. We should not slight and reject all other arguments which support the same doctrine, lest if our *favourite argument* should be refuted, and fail us, we should be tempted to abandon that *important* principle of truth. I think this was a very culpable practice in Descartes, and some of his followers, who when he had found out the argument for the *existence of God*, derived from the *idea of a most perfect and self-existent being*, he seemed to despise and abandon all other arguments against Atheism.

21. If we happen to have our *chief arguments* for any opinion refuted, we should not immediately give up the *opinion* itself; for perhaps it may be a truth still, and we may find it to be justly supported by other arguments, which we might once think weaker, or perhaps by new arguments which we knew not before.

22. We ought to esteem that to be *sufficient evidence of a proposition*, where both the *kind* and the *force* of the arguments or proofs are as great as the nature of the thing admits, and as the necessity or exigence of the case requires. So if we have a *credible and certain testimony* that *Christ rose from the dead*, it is enough; we are not to expect *mathematical* or *ocular demonstration* for it, at least in our day.

23. Though we should seek what proofs may be attained of any proposition, and we should receive any number of arguments which are just and evident for the confirmation of the same truth, yet we must not judge of the truth of any proposition by the *number of arguments* which are brought to support it, but by the *strength and weight of them*: A building will stand firmer and longer on four large pillars

pillars of marble, than on ten of sand, or earth, or timber.

24. Yet where certain evidence is not to be found or expected, a considerable *number of probable arguments* carry great weight with them even in matters of speculation. That is a *probable hypothesis* in *philosophy* or in *theology*, which goes farthest toward the solution of many difficult questions arising on any subject.

### S E C T. III.

#### *Principles and Rules of Judgment in Matters of MORALITY and RELIGION.*

**H**ERE it may be proper in the first place to mention a few definitions of words or terms.

By matters of *morality* and *religion*, I mean those things which relate to our duty to God, ourselves, or our fellow creatures.

*Moral good*, or *virtue*, or *holiness*, is an action or temper conformable to the rule of our duty. *Moral evil*, or *vice*, or *sin*, is an action or temper unconformable to the rule of our duty, or a neglect to fulfil it.

*Note*, The words *vice* or *virtue*, chiefly imply the relation of our actions to men and this world. *Sin* and *holiness*, rather imply their relation to God and the other world.

*Natural good* is that which gives us pleasure or satisfaction. *Natural evil* is that which gives us pain or grief.

*Happiness* consists in the attainment of the highest and most lasting natural good. *Misery* consists in suffering the highest and most lasting natural evil; that is, in short, *heaven* or *hell*.

Though this be a just account of *perfect happiness* and *perfect misery*, yet wheresoever *pain* overbalances *pleasure*, there is a *degree of misery*; and wheresoever  
pleasure



*pleasure overbalances pain, there is a degree of happiness.*

I proceed now to lay down some principles and rules of judgment in matters of morality and religion.

1. The will of our Maker, whether discovered by reason or revelation, carries the highest authority with it, and is therefore the *highest rule of duty* to intelligent creatures; a conformity or nonconformity to it determines their actions to be *morally good or evil*.

2. Whatsoever is really an *immediate duty* toward ourselves, or toward our fellow-creatures, is more *remotely a duty* to God; and therefore in the practice of it we should have an eye to the *will of God* as our rule, and to his *glory* as our end.

3. Our wise and gracious Creator has closely united *our duty* and *our happiness* together; and has connected *sin*, or *vice*, and *punishment*; that is, he has ordained that the *highest natural good and evil* should have a close connexion with *moral good and evil*, and that both in the nature of things, and by his own positive appointment.

4. Conscience should seek all due information, in order to determine what is *duty*, and what is *sin*, because *happiness* and *misery* depend upon it.

5. On this account our inclination to *present temporal good*, and our aversion to *present temporal evil*, must be wisely overbalanced by the consideration of *future and eternal good or evil*, that is, *happiness* or *misery*. And for this reason we should not omit a duty, or commit a sin, to gain any temporal good, or to avoid any temporal evil.

6. Though our *natural reason* in a *state of innocence* might be sufficient to find out those duties which were necessary for an innocent creature, in order to *abide* in the favour of his Maker, yet in a *fallen state*, our *natural reason* is by no means sufficient to find out all that is necessary to *restore* a sinful creature to the divine favour.

7. Therefore God hath condescended, in various

ages of mankind, to reveal to sinful men what he requires of them in order to their *restoration*, and has appointed in his word some peculiar matters of faith and practice, in order to their salvation. This is called *revealed religion*; as the things knowable concerning God and our duty by the light of nature, are called *natural religion*.

8. There are also many parts of *morality* and *natural religion*, or many natural duties relating to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbours, which would be exceeding difficult and tedious for the bulk of mankind to find out and determine by *natural reason*; therefore it has pleased God in this sacred book of *divine revelation*, to express the most necessary duties of this kind in a very plain and easy manner, and made them intelligible to souls of the lowest capacity; or they may be very easily derived thence by the use of reason.

9. As there are some duties much more *necessary*, and more *important* than others are, so every duty requires our application to understand and practise it, in proportion to its *necessity* and *importance*.

10. Where two duties seem to stand in opposition to each other, and we cannot practise both, the *less* must give way to the *greater*, and the omission of the less is not sinful. So *ceremonial laws* give way to *moral*: God *will have mercy and not sacrifice*

11. In duties of *natural religion*, we may judge of the different degrees of their necessity and importance by *reason*, according to their greater or more apparent tendency to the honour of God, and the good of men: But in matters of *revealed religion*, it is only divine revelation can certainly inform us what is most necessary and most important; yet we may be assisted also in that search by the exercises of reason.

12. In actions wherein there may be *some scruple* about the duty or lawfulness of them, we should choose always the safest side, and abstain as far as

we can from the practice of things whose lawfulness we suspect.

13. Points of the *greatest importance* in human life, or in religion, are generally the most evident, both in the nature of things, and in the word of God; and where points of faith and practice are *exceeding difficult* to find out, they cannot be *exceeding important*. This proposition may be proved by the goodness and faithfulness of God, as well as by experience and observation.

14. In some of the outward practices and forms of religion, as well as human affairs, there is frequently a *present necessity of speedy action* one way or another: In such a case, having surveyed arguments on both sides, as far as our time and circumstances admit, we must guide our practice by *those reasons which appear most probable*, and seem at that time to *overbalance* the rest; yet always reserving room to admit farther light and evidence, when such occurrences return again. It is a *preponderation of circumstantial arguments* that must determine our actions in a thousand occurrences.

15. We may also determine upon *probable arguments* where the matter is of *small consequence*, and would not answer the trouble of seeking after *certainty*. Life and time are more precious than to have a large share of them laid out in scrupulous inquiries, whether *smoking tobacco*, or *wearing a perriwig* be lawful or no.

16. In affairs of *greater importance*, and which may have a long, lasting, and extensive influence on our future conduct or happiness, we should not take up with *probabilities*, if *certainty* may be attained. Where there is any *doubt* on the mind in such cases, we should call in the assistance of all manner of circumstances, reasons, motives, consequences on all sides: We must wait longer, and with earnest request seek human and divine advice before we fully determine our judgment and our practice; according to the

old Roman sentence, *Quod statuendum est semel, deliberandum est diu*; "We should be long in considering what we must determine once for all."

#### S E C T. IV.

##### *Principles and Rules of Judgment in Matters of Human Prudence.*

**T**HE great design of *prudence*, as distinct from *morality* and *religion*, is to determine and manage every affair with decency, and to the best advantage.

That is *decent*, which is agreeable to our state, condition or circumstances, whether it be in behaviour, discourse, or action.

That is *advantageous* which attains the most and best purposes, and avoids the most and greatest inconveniencies.

As there is infinite variety in the *circumstances* of *persons*, *things*, *actions*, *times*, and *places*, so we must be furnished with such *general rules* as are accommodable to all this variety by a wise judgment and discretion: For what is an act of *consummate prudence* in some *times*, *places*, and *circumstances*, would be *consummate folly* in others. Now these *rules* may be ranged in the following manner.

1. Our regard to persons or things, should be governed by the *degrees of concernment* we have with them, the *relation* we have to them, or the *expectation* we have from them. These should be the measures by which we should proportion our diligence and application in any thing that relates to them.

2. We should always consider whether the thing we pursue be *attainable*; whether it be *worthy our pursuit*; whether it be worthy of the *degree of pursuit*; whether it be worthy of the *means* used in order to attain it. This rule is necessary both in matters of *knowledge*, and matters of *practice*.

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3. When the *advantages* and *disadvantages*, *conveniencies* and *inconveniencies* of any action are balanced together, we must finally determine on that side which has the superior weight; and the sooner in things which are necessarily and speedily to be done or determined.

4. If *advantages* and *disadvantages* in their own nature are equal, then those which are most *certain* or *likely as to the event*, should turn the scale of our judgment, and determine our practice.

5. Where the *improbabilities* of success or advantage are greater than the *probabilities*, it is not prudence to act or venture, if the action may be attended with danger or loss equal to the proposed gain. It is proper to inquire whether this be not the case in almost all *lotteries*; for they that hold stakes will certainly secure part to themselves; and only the remainder being divided into prizes must render the *improbability of gain* to each adventurer greater than the *probability*.

6. We should not despise or neglect any *real advantage*, and abandon the pursuit of it, though we cannot attain all the advantages that we desire. This would be to act like *children*, who are fond of something which strikes their fancy most, and sullen and regardless of every thing else, if they are not humoured in that fancy.

7. Though a *general knowledge* of things be useful in science and in human life, yet we should content ourselves with a more *superficial knowledge* of those things which have the least relation to our chief end and design.

8. This rule holds good also in *matters of business* and *practice*, as well as in *matters of knowledge*; and therefore we should not grasp at every thing, lest in the end we attain nothing. Persons that either by an inconstancy of temper, or by a vain ambition, will pursue every sort of art and science, study and business, seldom grow excellent in any one of them: And *projectors* who form twenty schemes, seldom use suf-



ficient application to finish one of them, or make it turn to good account.

9. Take heed of delaying and trifling amongst the *means* instead of reaching at the *end*. Take heed of wasting a life in *mere speculative* studies, which is called to *action* and *employment*: Dwell not too long in *philosophical*, *mathematical*, or *grammatical* parts of learning, when your chief design is *law*, *physick*, or *divinity*. Do not spend the day in gathering flowers by the way-side, lest night come upon you before you arrive at your journey's end, and then you will not reach it.

10. Where the *case and circumstances of wise and good men* resemble our *own case and circumstances*, we may borrow a great deal of instruction toward our present conduct from their *example*; as well as in all cases we may learn much from their *conversation and advice*.

11. After all other *rules* remember this, that *mere speculation* in matters of *human prudence* can never be a perfect director, without *experience and observation*. We may be content therefore in our younger years to commit some unavoidable mistakes in point of prudence, and we shall see mistakes enow in the conduct of others, both which ought to be treasured up amongst our useful *observations*, in order to teach us better judgment in time to come. Sometimes the *mistakes, imprudencies and follies*, which ourselves or others have been guilty of, give us brighter and more effectual lessons of *prudence*, than the wisest *counsels*, and the fairest *examples* could ever have done.

## S E C T. V.

### *Principles and Rules of Judgment in Matters of* HUMAN TESTIMONY.

THE evidence of *human testimony* is not so proper to lead us into the knowledge of the *essence and inward nature* of things, as to acquaint

us with the *existence* of things, and to inform us of *matters of fact* both past and present. And though there be a great deal of fallibility in the testimony of men, yet there are some things we may be almost as certain of, as that *the sun shines*, or that *five twenties make an hundred*. Who is there at London that knows any thing of the world, but believes there is such a city as Paris in France; that *the Pope dwells at Rome*; that *Julius Caesar was an emperor*, or that *Luther had a great hand in the reformation*?

If we observe the following rules, we may arrive at such a *certainty* in many things of human testimony, as that it is *morally* impossible we should be deceived, that is, we may obtain a *moral certainty*.

1. Let us consider whether the thing reported be in itself *possible*; if not, it can never be *credible*, whosoever relates it.

2. Consider farther whether it be *probable*, whether there are any *concurring circumstances* to prove it, beside the mere testimony of the person that relates it. I confess, if these last conditions are wanting, the thing may be true, but then it ought to have the stronger testimony to support it.

3. Consider whether the person that relates it be *capable of knowing the truth*: Whether he be a *skilful* judge in such matters, if it be a business of art, or a nice appearance in nature, or some curious experiment in philosophy. But if it be a mere occurrence in life, a plain, sensible matter of fact, it is enough to enquire whether he who relates it were an *eye or ear-witness*, or whether he himself had it only by *hearsay*, or can trace it up to the original.

4. Consider whether the narrator be *honest* and *faithful*, as well as *skilful*: Whether he hath no *bias* upon his mind, no *peculiar gain* or *profit* by believing or reporting it, no *interest* or *principle* which might warp his own belief aside from truth; or which might tempt him to prevaricate, to speak falsely,  
or

or to give a representation a little different from the naked truth of things. In short, whether there be no *occasion of suspicion* concerning his report.

5. Consider whether *several persons agree together* in the report of this matter; and if so, then whether these persons who joined together in their testimony, might not be supposed to *combine together in a falsehood*. Whether they are persons of *sufficient skill, probity and credit*. It might be also inquired, whether they are of different nations, sects, parties, opinions, or interests. For the more divided they are in all these, the more likely is their report to be true, if they agree together in their account of the same thing; and especially if they persist in it without wavering.

6. Consider farther, whether the report were *capable of being easily refuted at first* if it had not been true; if so, this confirms the testimony.

7. Inquire yet again, whether there has been a *constant, uniform tradition and belief* of this matter, from the very first age or time when the thing was transacted, without any reasonable doubts or contradictions. Or,

8. If any part of it hath been doubted by any considerable persons, whether it has been *searched out and afterwards confirmed*, by having all the scruples and doubts removed. In either of these cases the testimony becomes more firm and credible.

9. Inquire, on the other hand, whether there are any *considerable objections remaining* against the belief of that proposition so attested. Whether there be any thing very *improbable* in the thing itself. Whether any *concurrent circumstances* seem to *oppose* it. Whether any person or persons give a *positive and plain testimony* against it. Whether they are *equally skilful and equally faithful* as those who assert it. Whether there be as many or more in number;  
and

and whether they might have any secret bias or influence on them to contradict it.

10. Sometimes the *entire silence of a thing* may have something of weight toward the decision of a doubtful point of history, or a matter of human faith, namely, where the fact is pretended to be publick, if the persons who are silent about it were skilful to observe, and could not but know such an occurrence; if they were engaged by principle or by interest to have declared it: If they had a fair opportunity to speak of it: And these things may tend to make a matter suspicious, if it be not very well attested by positive proof.

11. Remember that in some reports there are *more marks of falshood than of truth*, and in others there are *more marks of truth than of falshood*. By a comparison of all these things together, and putting every argument on one side and the other into the balance, we must form as good a judgment as we can which side preponderates; and give a strong or a feeble assent or dissent, or withhold our judgment entirely, according to *greater or lesser evidence*, according to more plain or dubious marks of truth or falshood.

12. Observe that in matters of human testimony there is oftentimes a *great mixture of truth and falshood* in the report itself: Some parts of the story may be perfectly true, and some utterly false; and some may have such a blended confusion of circumstances which are a little warpt aside from the truth, and misrepresented, that there is need of good skill and accuracy to form a judgment concerning them, and determine which part is true, and which is false. The *whole* report is not to be believed, because some parts are *indubitably true*, nor the *whole* to be rejected, because some parts are as *evident falshoods*.

We may draw two remarkable *observations* from this section.

*Observ.*

*Observ. I.* How certain is the truth of the *Christian religion*, and particularly of the *resurrection of Christ*, which is a matter of fact on which *Christianity* is built! We have almost all the concurrent evidences that can be derived from *human testimony* joining to confirm this glorious truth. The fact is not impossible; concurrent circumstances cast a favourable aspect on it; it was foretold by one who wrought miracles, and therefore not unlikely, nor unexpected: The apostles and first disciples were eye and ear-witnesses for they conversed with their risen Lord; they were the most plain, honest men in themselves; the temptations of worldly interest did rather discourage their belief and report of it: They all agree in this matter, though they were men of different characters; *Pharisees* and *fishermen*, and *publicans*, men of *Judea* and *Galilee*, and perhaps some *heathens*, who were early converted: The thing might easily have been disproved if it were false; it hath been conveyed by constant *tradition* and *writing* down to our times; those who at first doubted, were afterwards convinced by *certain proofs*; nor have any pretended to give any proof of the contrary, but merely denied the fact with impudence, in opposition to all these evidences.

*Observ. II.* How weak is the faith which is due to a multitude of things in ancient human history! For though many of these *criteria*, or marks of credibility, are found plainly in the more *general and publick facts*, yet as to a multitude of *particular facts and circumstances*, how deficient are they in such evidence as should demand our assent! Perhaps there is nothing that ever was done in all past ages, and which was not a publick fact, so well attested as *the resurrection of Christ*.



## S E C T. VI.

*Principles and Rules of Judgment in Matters of  
DIVINE TESTIMONY.*

**A**S *human testimony* acquaints us with *matters of fact*, both *past*, and *present*, which lie beyond the reach of our own personal notice; so *divine testimony* is suited to inform us both of the *nature of things*, as well as *matters of fact*, and of things *future*, as well as *present* or *past*.

Whatsoever is dictated to us by God himself, or by men who are divinely inspired, must be believed with full assurance. *Reason* demands us to believe whatsoever *divine revelation* dictates: For God is perfectly *wise*, and cannot be deceived; he is *faithful* and *good*, and will not deceive his creatures: And when *reason* has found out the certain marks or credentials of *divine testimony* to belong to any proposition, there remains then no farther inquiry to be made, but only to find out the true sense and meaning of that which God has revealed, for *reason* itself demands the belief of it.

Now *divine testimony* or *revelation* requires these following credentials.

1. That the propositions or doctrines revealed be not *inconsistent with reason*; for intelligent creatures can never be bound to believe real inconsistencies. Therefore we are sure the popish doctrine of transubstantiation is not a matter of *divine revelation*, because it is contrary to all our senses and our reason, even in their proper exercises.

God can dictate nothing but what is worthy of himself, and agreeable to his own nature and divine perfections. Now many of these perfections are discoverable by the light of reason, and whatsoever is inconsistent with these perfections cannot be a *divine revelation*.

But

But let be noted, that in matters of *practice* towards our *fellow-creatures*, God may command us to act in a manner contrary to what reason would direct antecedent to that command. So Abraham was commanded to offer up his son a sacrifice: The Israelites were ordered to borrow of the Egyptians without paying them, and to plunder and slay the inhabitants of Canaan: Because God has a sovereign right to all things, and can with equity dispossess his creatures of life, and every thing which he has given them, and especially such sinful creatures as mankind; and he can appoint whom he pleases to be the instruments of this just dispossession or deprivation. So that these divine commands are not really inconsistent with *right reason*; for whatsoever is so cannot be believed, where that *inconsistency* appears.

2. Upon the same account the *whole doctrine of revelation* must be *consistent with itself*; every part of it must be consistent with each other: And though in points of *practice* latter revelation may repeal or cancel former divine laws, yet in matters of *belief* no latter revelation can be inconsistent with what has been heretofore revealed.

3. Divine revelation must be confirmed by some *divine and supernatural appearances*, some extraordinary *signs or tokens, visions, voices, or miracles* wrought, or *prophecies* fulfilled. There must be some demonstrations of the presence and power of God, superior to all the powers of nature, or the settled connexion which God as Creator has established among his creatures in this visible world.

4. If there are any such extraordinary and wonderful appearances and operations brought to contest with, or to oppose *divine revelation*, there must and always will be such a *superiority* on the side of that *revelation* which is truly *divine*, as to manifest that God is there. This was the case when the Egyptian forcerers contended with Moses. But the wonders

ders which Moses wrought, did so far transcend the powers of the *magicians*, as made them confess *It was the finger of God.*

5. These divine appearances or attestations to revelation must be either *known to ourselves*, by our own personal observation of them, or they must be *sufficiently attested by others*, according to the *principles and rules* by which matters of *human faith* are to be judged in the foregoing section.

Some of those, who lived in the nations and ages where miracles were wrought, were eye and ear-witnesses of the truth and divinity of the revelation; but we, who live in these distant ages, must have them derived down to us by just and incontestible *history and tradition*. We also, even in these distant times, may see the accomplishment of some *ancient predictions*, and thereby obtain that advantage toward the confirmation of our faith in *divine revelation*, beyond what those persons enjoyed who lived when the *predictions* were pronounced.

6. There is another very considerable confirmation of *divine testimony*; and that is, when the doctrines themselves, either on the publication or the belief of them, produce supernatural effects. Such were the *miraculous powers* which were communicated to believers in the first ages of Christianity, the *conversion of Jews or Gentiles*, the amazing *success of the gospel of Christ*, without human aid, and in opposition to a thousand impediments; its power in changing the hearts and lives of ignorant and vicious *heathens*, and wicked and profane creatures in all nations, and filling them with a spirit of virtue, piety and goodness. Wheresoever persons have found this effect in their own hearts, wrought by a belief of the gospel of Christ, they have a witness in themselves of the truth of it, and abundant reason to believe it *divine*.

Of the difference between *reason and revelation*,  
Y
and

and in what sense the latter is superior, see more in chap. II. sect. 9. and chap. IV. direct. 6.

## S E C T. VII.

*Principles and Rules of judging, concerning things past, present, and to come, by the mere Use of Reason.*

**T**HOUGH we attain the greatest assurance of things *past* and *future* by *divine faith*, and learn many matters of fact, both *past* and *present*, by *human faith*, yet *reason* also may in a good degree assist us to judge of matters of fact both *past*, *present*, and *to come*, by the following principles.

1. There is a *system* of beings round about us, of which we *ourselves* are a part, which we call the *world*, and in this world there is a course of nature, or a settled order of *causes*, *effects*, *antecedents*, *concomitants*, *consequences*, &c. from which the author of nature doth not vary but upon very important occasions.

2. Where *antecedents*, *concomitants*, and *consequents*, *causes* and *effects*, *signs* and *things signified*, *subjects* and *adjuncts*, are necessarily connected with each other, we may infer the causes from the effects, and effects from causes, the antecedents from the consequents, as well as consequents from antecedents, &c. and thereby be pretty certain of many things both *past*, *present*, and *to come*. It is by this principle that astronomers can tell *what day and hour the sun and moon were eclipsed five hundred years ago*, and predict all *future eclipses* as long as the world shall stand. They can tell precisely at *what minute the sun rises or sets this day at Pequín in China*, or *what altitude the dog-star had at midnight or mid-noon in Rome, on the day when Julius Caesar was slain*. Gardeners upon the same principle can foretel the *months* when every plant will be in *bloom*, and the ploughman knows the *weeks* of *harvest*: We are  
sure,

sure, if there be a *chicken*, there was an *egg*: If there be a *rainbow*, we are certain it rains not far off: If we behold a *tree* growing on the *earth*, we know it has naturally a *root* under ground.

3. Where there is a *necessary* connexion between *causes* and *effects*, *antecedents* and *consequents*, *signs* and *things signified*, we know also that *like* causes will have *like* effects, and *proportionable* causes will have *proportionable* effects, *contrary* causes will have *contrary* effects; and observing men may form many judgments by the rules of similitude and proportion, where the *causes*, *effects*, &c. are not entirely the same.

4. Where there is but a *probable* and *uncertain* connexion between *antecedents*, *concomitants* and *consequents*, we can give but a conjecture, or a *probable* determination. If the *clouds* gather, or the *weather-glass* sinks, we suppose it will rain: If a man *spit blood frequently with coughing*, we suppose his *lungs* are hurt: If very *dangerous symptoms* appear, we expect his *death*.

5. Where causes operate freely, with a liberty of *indifference to this or the contrary*, there we cannot certainly know what the effects will be: For it seems to be contingent, and the certain knowledge of it belongs only to God. This is the case in the greatest part of human actions.

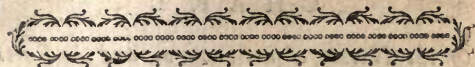
6. Yet wise men by a just observation of human nature, will give very probable conjectures in this matter also concerning things *past*, or things *future*, because human nature in all ages and nations has such a conformity to itself. By a knowledge of the tempers of men and their present circumstances, we may be able to give a happy guess what their conduct will be, and what will be the event, by an observation of the like cases in former times. This made the Emperor Marcus Antoninus to say, “By  
“ looking back into history, and considering the  
“ fate and revolutions of governments, you will  
“ be able to form a guess, and almost prophesy  
Y 2 “ upon



“ upon the future. For things past, present, and  
 “ to come, are strangely uniform, and of a colour;  
 “ and are commonly cast in the same mould. So  
 “ that upon the matter, forty years of human life  
 “ may serve for a sample of ten thousand.” *Collier’s Antoninus*, Book VII. sect. 50.

7. There are also some other principles of judging concerning the past actions of men in former ages, besides *books, histories* and *traditions*, which are the mediums of conveying human testimony; as we may infer the skill and magnificence of the *antients* by some fragments of their *statues*, and ruins of their *buildings*. We know what Roman legions came into Great Britain by numbers of bricks dug out of the earth in some parts of the island, with the marks of some *particular legion* upon them, which must have been employed there in brick-making. We rectify some mistakes in history by *statues, coins, old altars, utensils of war, &c.* We confirm or disprove some pretended traditions and historical writings, by *medals, images, pictures, urns, &c.*

Thus I have gone through all those *particular objects of our judgment* which I first proposed, and have laid down principles and rules by which we may safely conduct ourselves therein. There is a variety of other objects, concerning which we are occasionally called to pass a judgment, namely, The *characters of persons, the value and worth of things, the sense and meaning of particular writers, matters of wit, oratory, poesy, matters of equity in judicial courts, matters of traffick and commerce between man and man*, which would be endless to enumerate. But if the *general and special rules of judgment* which have been mentioned in these two last chapters, are treasured up in the mind, and wrought into the very temper of our souls in our younger years, they will lay a foundation for just and regular judgment concerning a thousand special occurrences in the *religious, civil, and learned life.*



T H E  
T H I R D P A R T  
O F  
L O G I C K.



Of REASONING and SYLLOGISM.

**A**S the first work of the mind is *perception*, whereby our *ideas* are framed, and the second is *judgment*, which joins or disjoins our ideas, and forms a *proposition*, so the third operation of the mind is *reasoning*, which joins several propositions together, and makes a *syllogism*, that is, an *argument* whereby we are wont to infer something that is less known, from truths which are more evident.

In treating of this subject, let us consider more particularly,

1. The nature of a syllogism, and the parts of which it is composed.
2. The several kinds of syllogisms, with particular rules relating to them.
3. The doctrine of sophisms, or false reasoning, together with the means of avoiding them, and the manner of solving or answering them.
4. Some general rules to direct our reasoning.

## C H A P. I.

*Of the Nature of a Syllogism, and the Parts of which it is composed.*

**I**F the mere *perception* and *comparison* of two ideas would always shew us whether they agree or disagree; then all rational propositions would be *matters of intelligence*, or *first principles*, and there would be no use of *reasoning*, or drawing any consequences. It is the narrowness of the human mind which introduces the necessity of *reasoning*. When we are unable to judge of the truth or falshood of a proposition in an *immediate* manner, by the mere contemplation of its subject and predicate, we are then constrained to use a *medium*, and to compare each of them with some *third idea*, that by seeing how far they agree or disagree with it, we may be able to judge how far they agree or disagree among themselves; As, if there are two lines, *A* and *B*, and I know not whether they are *equal* or no, I take a third line *C*, or an *inch*, and apply it to each of them; if it agree with them both, then I infer that *A* and *B* are *equal*; but if it agree with one, and not with the other, then I conclude *A* and *B* are *unequal*: If it agree with neither of them, there can be no comparison.

So if the question be *whether God must be worshipped*, we seek a *third idea*, suppose the idea of a Creator, and say,

*Our Creator must be worshipped;*

*God is our Creator;*

*Therefore God must be worshipped.*

The comparison of this *third idea*, with the two distinct parts of the question, usually requires two propositions, which are called the *premises*: The third proposition which is drawn from them is the *conclusion*,

*conclusion*, wherein the *question* itself is answered, and the subject and predicate joined either in the *negative* or the *affirmative*.

The *foundation* of all *affirmative conclusions* is laid in this general truth, that so far as two proposed ideas agree to any third idea, they agree also among themselves. The character of *Creator* agrees to *God*, and *worship* agrees to a *Creator*, therefore *worship* agrees to *God*.

The *foundation* of all *negative conclusions* is this, that where one of the two proposed ideas agrees with the third idea, and the other disagrees with it, they must needs disagree so far also with one another; as, if *no sinners are happy*, and if *angels are happy*, then *angels are not sinners*.

Thus it appears what is the strict and just notion of a *sylogism*: It is a sentence or argument made up of *three* propositions, so disposed, as that the last is necessarily inferred from those which go before, as in the instances which have been just mentioned.

In the *constitution* of a *sylogism* two things may be considered, *viz.* the *matter* and the *form* of it.

The *matter* of which a *sylogism* is made up, is *three propositions*; and these three propositions are made up of *three ideas* or *terms* variously joined.

The *three terms* are called the *remote matter* of a *sylogism*; and the *three propositions* the *proxime* or *immediate matter* of it.

The three terms are named the *major*, the *minor*, and the *middle*.

The predicate of the conclusion is called the *major term*, because it is generally of a larger extension than the *minor term*, or the *subject*. The *major* and *minor terms* are called the *extremes*.

The *middle term* is the *third idea* invented, and disposed in two propositions, in such a manner as to shew the connexion between the *major* and *minor term*

*term* in the conclusion; for which reason the *middle term* itself is sometimes called the *argument*.

That proposition which contains the predicate of the conclusion, connected with the middle term, is usually called the *major proposition*, whereas the *minor proposition* connects the middle term with the subject of the conclusion, and is sometimes called the *assumption*.

*Note*, This exact distinction of the several parts of a syllogism, and of the major and minor terms connected with the middle term in the major and minor propositions, does chiefly belong to *simple* or *categorical syllogisms*, of which we shall speak in the next chapter, though all syllogisms whatsoever have something analogical to it.

*Note* farther, That the *major* proposition is generally placed first, and the *minor* second, and the *conclusion* in the last place, where the syllogism is regularly composed and represented.

The *form of a syllogism*, is the framing and disposing of the premises according to art or just principles of reasoning, and the regular inference of the conclusion from them.

The *act of reasoning*, or inferring one thing from another, is generally expressed and known by the particle *therefore*, when the argument is formed according to the rules of art; though in common discourse or writing, such *causal* particles as *for*, *because*, manifest the act of reasoning as well as the *illative* particles *then* and *therefore*: And wheresoever any of these words are used, there is a perfect syllogism expressed or implied, though perhaps the three propositions do not appear, or are not placed in regular form.



## C H A P. II.

*Of the various Kinds of Syllogisms, with particular Rules relating to them.*

**S**YLLOGISMS are divided into various kinds, either according to the *question* which is proved by them, according to the *nature* and *composition* of them, or according to the *middle term*, which is used to prove the question.

## S E C T. I.

*Of universal and particular Syllogisms, both negative and affirmative.*

**A**CCORDING to the *question* which is to be proved, so syllogisms are divided into *universal affirmative*, *universal negative*, *particular affirmative*, and *particular negative*. This is often called a division of syllogisms drawn from the *conclusion*; for so many sorts of conclusions there may be, which are marked with the letters, *A*, *E*, *I*, *O*.

In an *universal affirmative syllogism*, one idea is proved universally to agree with another, and may be universally affirmed of it, as, *Every sin deserves death, every unlawful wish is a sin; therefore every unlawful wish deserves death.*

In an *universal negative syllogism*, one idea is proved to disagree with another idea universally, and may be thus denied of it; as, *No injustice can be pleasing to God; all persecution for the sake of conscience is injustice; therefore no persecution for conscience sake can be pleasing to God.*

*Particular affirmative*, and *particular negative syllogisms*, may be easily understood by what is said of  
universals,

*universals*, and there will be sufficient examples given of all these in the next section.

The *general principle* upon which these universal and particular syllogisms are founded, is this, Whatsoever is affirmed or denied universally of any idea, may be affirmed or denied of all the particular kinds or beings, which are contained in the extension of that universal idea. So the *desert of death* is affirmed universally of *sin*, and an *unlawful wish* is one particular kind of *sin*, therefore the *desert of death* may be affirmed concerning an *unlawful wish*. And so of the rest.

*Note*, In the doctrine of syllogisms, a *singular* and an *indefinite* proposition are ranked among *universals*, as was before observed in the doctrine of propositions.

## S E C T. II.

*Of plain, simple Syllogisms, and their Rules.*

**T**HE next division of syllogisms is into *single* and *compound*. This is drawn from the nature and composition of them.

*Single syllogisms* are made up of three propositions: *Compound syllogisms* contain more than three propositions, and may be formed into two or more syllogisms.

*Single syllogisms*, for distinction's sake, may be divided into \* *simple*, *complex*, and *conjunctive*.

Those are properly called *simple* or *categorical syllogisms*, which are made up of three *plain, single, or categorical propositions*, wherein the middle term is evidently and regularly joined with one part of the question,

\* As ideas and propositions are divided into *single* and *compound*, and *single* are subdivided into *simple* and *complex*; so there are the same divisions and subdivisions applied to syllogisms.

question in the major proposition, and with the other in the minor, whence there follows a plain single conclusion; as, *Every human virtue is to be sought with diligence; prudence is a human virtue; therefore prudence is to be sought diligently.*

*Note,* Though the terms of propositions may be complex; yet where the composition of the whole argument is thus *plain, simple, and regular*, it is properly called a *simple syllogism*, since the *complexion* does not belong to the syllogistick form of it.

*Simple syllogisms* have several *rules* belonging to them, which being observed, will generally secure us from false inferences: But these *rules* being founded on four *general axioms*, it is necessary to mention these *axioms* beforehand, for the use of those who will enter into the speculative reason of all these rules.

*Axiom 1.* Particular propositions are contained in universals, and may be inferred from them; but universals are not contained in particulars, nor can be inferred from them.

*Axiom 2.* In all universal propositions, the subject is universal: In all particular propositions, the subject is particular.

*Axiom 3.* In all affirmative propositions, the predicate has no greater extension than the subject; for its extension is restrained by the subject, and therefore it is always to be esteemed as a particular idea. It is by mere accident, if it ever be taken universally, and cannot happen but in such universal or singular propositions as are *reciprocal*.

*Axiom 4.* The predicate of a negative proposition is always taken universally, for in its whole extension it is denied of the subject: If we say, *No stone is vegetable*, we deny all sorts of *vegetation* concerning *stones*.

*The Rules of simple, regular Syllogisms are these.*

Rule I. *The middle term must not be taken twice particularly, but once at least universally.* For if the middle term be taken for two different parts or kinds of the same universal idea, then the subject of the conclusion is compared with one of these parts, and the predicate with another part, and this will never shew whether that subject and predicate agree or disagree: There will then be *four distinct terms* in the syllogism, and the two parts of the question will not be compared with the *same third idea*; as if I say, *Some men are pious, and some men are robbers*, I can never infer that *some robbers are pious*, for the middle term *men* being taken twice particularly, it is not the *same men* who are spoken of in the major and minor propositions.

Rule II. *The terms in the conclusion must never be taken more universally than they are in the premises.* The reason is derived from the first axiom, that *generals can never be inferred from particulars*.

Rule III. *A negative conclusion cannot be proved by two affirmative premises.* For when the two terms of the conclusion are united or agree to the middle term, it does not follow by any means that they disagree with one another.

Rule IV. *If one of the premises be negative, the conclusion must be negative.* For if the middle term be denied of either part of the conclusion, it may shew that the terms of the conclusion disagree, but it can never shew that they agree.

Rule V. *If either of the premises be particular, the conclusion must be particular.* This may be proved for the most part from the first axiom.

These two last rules are sometimes united in this single sentence, *The conclusion always follows the weaker part of the premises*. Now negatives and particulars are counted inferior to affirmatives and universals.

Rule

Rule VI. *From two negative premises nothing can be concluded.* For they separate the middle term both from the subject and predicate of the conclusion, and when two ideas disagree to a third, we cannot infer that they either agree or disagree with each other.

Yet where the *negation* is a part of the *middle term*, the two premises may look like *negatives* according to the words, but one of them is *affirmative* in sense; as, *What has no thought cannot reason*; but *a worm has no thought*; therefore *a worm cannot reason*. The minor proposition does really affirm the middle term concerning the subject, namely, *a worm is what has no thought*, and thus it is properly in this syllogism an *affirmative* proposition.

Rule VII. *From two particular premises nothing can be concluded.* This rule depends chiefly on the first axiom.

A more laborious and accurate proof of these rules, and the derivation of every part of them in all possible cases, from the foregoing axioms, require so much time, and are of so little importance to assist *the right use of reason*, that it is needless to insist longer upon them here. See all this done ingeniously in the *Logick called the Art of Thinking*, part III. chap. III. &c.

### S E C T. III.

#### *Of the Moods and Figures of simple Syllogisms.*

**S**IMPLE *syllogisms* are adorned and surrounded in the common books of logick with a variety of inventions about *moods* and *figures*, wherein by the artificial contexture of the letters *A, E, I, and O*, men have endeavoured to transform *logick*, or the *art of reasoning*, into a sort of *mechanism*, and to teach boys to syllogize, or frame arguments and refute them, without any real inward knowledge of the  

Z

question.



question. This is almost in the same manner as school-boys have been taught perhaps in their trifling years to compose *Latin verses*, that is, by certain tables and squares, with a variety of letters in them, wherein by counting every sixth, seventh, or eight letter, certain Latin words should be framed in the form of *hexameters* or *pentameters*; and this may be done by those who know nothing of *Latin* or of *verses*.

I confess some of these logical subtilties have much more use than those versifying tables, and there is much ingenuity discovered in determining the precise number of syllogisms that may be formed in every *figure*, and giving the reasons of them; yet the light of nature, a good judgment, and due consideration of things, tend more to true reasoning, than all the trappings of *moods* and *figures*.

But lest this book be charged with too great defects and imperfections, it may be proper to give short hints of that which some *logicians* have spent so much time and paper upon.

All the possible compositions of three of the letters, *A, E, I, O*, to make three propositions, amount to *sixty-four*; but fifty-four of them are excluded from forming true syllogisms by the *seven rules* in the foregoing section: The remaining *ten* are variously diversified by *figures* and *moods* into *fourteen* syllogisms.

The *figure* of a *syllogism* is the proper disposition of the middle term with the parts of the question.

A *mood* is the regular determination of propositions according to their *quantity* and *quality*, that is, their universal or particular affirmation or negation; which are signified by certain artificial words wherein the consonants are neglected, and these four vowels, *A, E, I, O*, are only regarded.

There are generally counted *three figures*.

In the *first* of them the *middle term* is the subject of the major proposition, and the *predicate* of the minor,

minor. This contains four moods, called *Barbara*, *Celarent*, *Darii*, *Ferio*. And it is the excellency of this figure, that all sorts of questions or conclusions may be proved by it, whether *A*, *E*, *I*, or *O*, that is, universal or particular, affirmative or negative; as,

*Bar*- Every wicked man is truly miserable :  
*ba*- All tyrants are wicked men ;  
*ra*. Therefore all tyrants are truly miserable.

*Ce*- He that is always in fear is not happy ;  
*la*- Covetous men are always in fear ;  
*rent*. Therefore covetous men are not happy.

*Da*- Whatsoever furthers our salvation is good for us ;  
*ri*- Some afflictions further our salvation ;  
*i*. Therefore some afflictions are good for us.

*Fe*- Nothing that must be repented of is truly desirable ;  
*ri*- Some pleasures must be repented of ;  
*o*. Therefore there are some pleasures which are not truly desirable.

In the *second* figure the *middle term* is the *predicate* of *both* the premises; this contains four moods, namely, *Cesare*, *Camestres*, *Festino*, *Baroco*, and it admits only of negative conclusions; as,

*Ce*- No liar is fit to be believed ;  
*sa*- Every good Christian is fit to be believed ;  
*re*. Therefore no good Christian is a liar ;

The reader may easily form examples of the rest.

The *third* figure requires that the *middle term* be the *subject* of *both* the premises. It has six moods, namely, *Darapti*, *Felapton*, *Disamis*, *Datifi*, *Bocardo*, *Peripson* : And it admits only of particular conclusions; as,

- Da-* Whosoever loves God shall be saved;  
*rap-* All the lovers of God have their imperfections;  
*ti.* Therefore some who have imperfections shall be saved.

I leave the reader to form examples of the rest.

The moods of these three figures are comprised in four Latin verses.

*Barbara, Celarent, Darii, Ferio, quoque primæ.  
 Cesare, Camestres, Festino, Baroco, secundæ.  
 Tertia Darapti sibi vindicat, atque Felapton,  
 Adjungens Disamis, Datifi, Bocardo, Ferison.*

The *special rules* of the three figures are these.

In the *first figure* the major proposition must always be universal, and the minor affirmative.

In the *second figure* also the major must be universal, and one of the premises, together with the conclusion, must be negative.

In the *third figure* the minor must be affirmative, and the conclusion always particular.

There is also a *fourth figure*, wherein the middle term is *predicated* in the *major* proposition, and *sub-jected* in the *minor*: But this is a very indirect and oblique manner of concluding, and is never used in the sciences, nor in human life, and therefore I call it useless.—Some logicians will allow it to be nothing else but a mere inversion of the first figure; the moods of it, namely, *Baralippton*, or *Barbari, Calentes, Dibaiis, Fespamo, Fresison*, are not worthy to be explained by one example.

## S E C T. IV.

### *Of complex Syllogisms.*

**I**T is not the mere use of *complex terms* in a syllogism that gives it this name, though one of the terms

terms is usually *complex*; but those are properly called *complex syllogisms*, in which the middle term is not connected with the whole subject, or the whole predicate in two distinct propositions, but is intermingled and compared with them by parts, or in a more confused manner, in different forms of speech; as,

*The sun is a senseless being;*

*The Persians worshipped the sun;*

*Therefore the Persians worshipped a senseless being.*

Here the predicate of the conclusion is *worshipped a senseless being*, part of which is joined with the middle term *sun* in the major proposition, and the other part in the minor.

Though this sort of argument is confessed to be *entangled or confused*, and *irregular*, if examined by the rules of *simple syllogisms*; yet there is a great variety of arguments used in books of learning, and in common life, whose consequence is strong and evident, and which must be ranked under this head; as,

I. *Exclusive* propositions will form a complex argument; as, *Pious men are the only favourites of heaven; True Christians are favourites of heaven; Therefore true Christians are pious men.* Or thus, *Hypocrites are not pious men; Therefore hypocrites are no favourites of heaven.*

II. *Exceptive* propositions will make such complex syllogisms; as, *None but physicians came to the consultation; The nurse is no physician; Therefore the nurse came not to the consultation.*

III. Or, *comparative* propositions; as, *Knowledge is better than riches; Virtue is better than knowledge; Therefore virtue is better than riches.* Or thus, *A dove will fly a mile in a minute; A swallow flies swifter than a dove; Therefore a swallow will fly more than a mile in a minute.*

IV. Or *inceptive and desitive* propositions; as, *The*

*fogs vanish as the sun rises; But the fogs have not yet begun to vanish; Therefore the sun is not yet risen.*

V. Or modal propositions; as, *It is necessary that a general understand the art of war; But Caius does not understand the art of war; Therefore it is necessary Caius should not be a general.* Or thus, *A total eclipse of the sun would cause darkness at noon; It is possible that the moon at that time may totally eclipse the sun: Therefore it is possible that the moon may cause darkness at noon.*

Beside all these, there is a great number of complex syllogisms which can hardly be reduced under any particular titles, because the forms of human language are so exceeding various; as,

*Christianity requires us to believe what the apostles wrote; St. Paul is an apostle; Therefore Christianity requires us to believe what St. Paul wrote.*

*No human artist can make an animal; A fly or a worm is an animal; Therefore no human artist can make a fly or a worm.*

*The father always lived in London; The son always lived with the father; Therefore the son always lived in London.*

*The blossom soon follows the full bud; This pear-tree hath many full buds; Therefore it will shortly have many blossoms.*

*One hailstone never falls alone; But a hailstone fell just now; Therefore others fell with it.*

*Thunder seldom comes without lightening; but it thundered yesterday; therefore probably it lightened also.*

*Moses wrote before the Trojan war; the first Greek historians wrote after the Trojan war; therefore the first Greek historians wrote after Moses\*.*

Now

\* Perhaps some of these syllogisms may be reduced to those which I call *connexive* afterward; but it is of little moment to what species they belong; for it is not any formal set of rules, so much as the evidence and force of reason, that must determine the truth or falshood of all such syllogisms.



Now the force of all these arguments is so evident and conclusive, that though the form of the syllogism be never so irregular, yet we are sure the *inferences* are just and true; for the *premises*, according to the reason of things, do really contain the conclusion that is deduced from them, which is a never-failing test of a true syllogism, as shall be shewn hereafter.

The truth of most of these *complex syllogisms* may also be made to appear, if needful, by reducing them either to *regular, simple syllogisms*, or to some of the *conjunctive syllogisms*, which are described in the next section. I will give an instance only in the first, and leave the rest to exercise the ingenuity of the reader.

The first argument may be reduced to a syllogism in *Barbara*, thus,

*The sun is a senseless being;*

*What the Persians worshipped is the sun;*

Therefore *what the Persians worshipped is a senseless being*. Though the conclusive force of this argument is evident without this reduction.

## S E C T. V.

### *Of conjunctive Syllogisms.*

THOSE are called *conjunctive syllogisms*, wherein one of the premises, namely, the major, has distinct parts, which are joined by a *conjunction*, or some such particle of speech. Most times the major or minor, or both, are *explicitly compound propositions*; and generally the *major* proposition is made up of two distinct parts or propositions, in such a manner, as that by the assertion of one in the *minor*, the other is either asserted or denied in the *conclusion*: Or, by the denial of one in the *minor*, the other is either asserted or denied in the *conclusion*. It is hardly possible indeed to fit any short definition to

to include all the kinds of them; but the chief amongst them are the *conditional* syllogism, the *disjunctive*, the *relative*, and the *connexive*.

I. The *conditional*, or *hypothetical* syllogism, is that whose major or minor, or both, are *conditional* propositions; as, *If there be a God, the world is governed by providence; but there is a God; therefore the world is governed by providence.*

These syllogisms admit two sorts of true argumentation, where the major is *conditional*.

1. When the antecedent is asserted in the minor, that the consequent may be asserted in the conclusion; such is the preceding example. This is called *arguing from the position of the antecedent to the position of the consequent*.

2. When the consequent is contradicted in the minor proposition, that the antecedent may be contradicted in the conclusion; as, *If Atheists are in the right, then the world exists without a cause: but the world does not exist without a cause; therefore Atheists are not in the right.* This is called *arguing from the removing of the consequent to the removing of the antecedent*.

To remove the antecedent or consequent here, does not merely signify the *denial* of it, but the *contradiction* of it; for the mere *denial* of it by a *contrary* proposition will not make a true syllogism, as appears thus: *If every creature be reasonable, every brute is reasonable; but no brute is reasonable; therefore no creature is reasonable.* Whereas if you say in the minor, *but every brute is not reasonable*, then it would follow truly in the conclusion, *therefore every creature is not reasonable.*

When the antecedent or consequent are *negative* propositions, they are removed by an affirmative; as, *If there be no God, then the world does not discover creating wisdom; but the world does discover creating wisdom; therefore there is a God.* In this instance the consequent is removed or contradicted in the  
minor,

minor, that the antecedent may be contradicted in the conclusion. So in this argument of St Paul, 1 Cor. xv. *If the dead rise not, Christ died in vain; but Christ did not die in vain; therefore the dead shall rise.*

There are also two sorts of false arguing, namely, (1.) *From the removing of the antecedent to the removing of the consequent*; or, (2.) *From the position of the consequent, to the position of the antecedent.* Examples of these are easily framed; as,

(1.) *If a minister were a prince he must be honoured; but a minister is not a prince; therefore he must not be honoured.*

(2.) *If a minister were a prince he must be honoured; but a minister must be honoured; therefore he is a prince.*

Who sees not the ridiculous falshood of both these syllogisms?

*Observ. I.* If the subject of the antecedent and the consequent be the same, then the *hypothetical* syllogism may be turned into a *categorical* one; as *If Caesar be a king, he must be honoured; but Caesar is a king; therefore, &c.* This may be changed thus, *Every king must be honoured; but Caesar is a king; therefore, &c.*

*Observ. II.* If the *major* proposition only be *conditional*, the conclusion is *categorical*: But if the *minor* or *both* be *conditional*, the conclusion is also *conditional*; as, *The worshippers of images are idolaters; If the Papists worship a crucifix, they are worshippers of an image; therefore, If the Papists worship a crucifix, they are idolaters.* But this sort of syllogisms should be avoided as much as possible in disputation, because they greatly embarrass a cause: The syllogisms, whose major only is *hypothetical*, are very frequent, and used with great advantage.

II. A *disjunctive syllogism*, is when the major proposition is *disjunctive*; as, *The earth moves in a circle*

or an *ellipsis*; but it does not move in a circle; therefore it moves in an *ellipsis*.

A *disjunctive syllogism* may have many members or parts; thus, *It is either spring, summer, autumn, or winter*; but *It is not spring, autumn or winter*; therefore *It is summer*.

The true method of arguing here, is from the *assertion of one, to the denial of the rest*, or from the *denial of one or more, to the assertion of what remains*; but the major should be so framed, that the several parts of it cannot be true together, though one of them is evidently true.

III. A *relative syllogism* requires the major proposition to be relative; as, *Where Christ is, there shall his servants be*; but *Christ is in heaven*; therefore *his servants shall be there also*. Or, *As is the captain, so are his soldiers*; but *the captain is a coward*; therefore *his soldiers are so too*.

Arguments that relate to the doctrine of proportion, must be referred to this head; as, *As two are to four, so are three to six*; but *two make the half of four*; therefore *three make the half of six*.

Besides these, there is another sort of syllogism which is very natural and common, and yet authors take very little notice of it, call it by an improper name, and describe it very defectively; and that is,

IV. A *connexive syllogism*. This some have called *copulative*; but it does by no means require the major to be a *copulative* nor a *compound* proposition (according to the definition given of it, *Part. II. chap. II. sect. 6.*) but it requires that two or more ideas be so connected either in the complex subject or predicate of the major, that if one of them be affirmed or denied in the minor, common sense will naturally shew us what will be the consequence. It would be very tedious and useless to frame particular rules about them, as will appear by the following

lowing examples, which are very various, and yet may be farther multiplied.

(1.) *Meekness and humility always go together; Moses was a man of meekness; therefore Moses was also humble. Or we may form this minor, Pharaoh was no humble man; therefore he was not meek.*

(2.) *No man can serve God and mammon; the covetous man serves mammon; therefore he cannot serve God. Or the minor may run thus, The true Christian serves God; therefore he does not serve mammon.*

(3.) *Genius must join with study to make a great man; Florino has genius, but he cannot study; therefore Florino will never be a great man. Or thus, Quintus studies hard, but has no genius; therefore Quintus will never be a great man.*

(4.) *Gulo cannot make a dinner without flesh and fish; there was no fish to be gotten to-day; therefore Gulo this day cannot make a dinner.*

(5.) *London and Paris are in different latitudes; the latitude of London is  $51\frac{1}{2}$  degrees; therefore this cannot be the latitude of Paris.*

(6.) *Joseph and Benjamin had one mother; Rachael was the mother of Joseph; therefore she was Benjamin's mother too.*

(7.) *The father and the son are of equal stature; the father is six feet high; therefore the son is six feet high also.*

(8.) *Pride is inconsistent with innocence; Angels have innocence; therefore they have no pride. Or thus; Devils have pride; therefore they have not innocence.*

I might multiply other instances of these connexive syllogisms, by bringing in all sorts of *exceptive, exclusive, comparative, and modal* propositions, into the composition of them; for all these may be wrought into *conjunctive*, as well as into *simple* syllogisms, and thereby we may render them *complex*. But it would waste time and paper without equal profit.

Concerning these various kinds of *conjunctive syllogisms*, take these two observations.

*Observ.*



*Observ. I.* Most of them may be transformed into *categorical* syllogisms by those who have a mind to prove the truth of them that way; or they may be easily converted into each other by changing the forms of speech.

*Observ. II.* These *conjunctive* syllogisms are seldom deficient or faulty in the form of them; for such a deficiency would be discovered at first glance generally by common reason, without any artificial rules of logick: The chief care therefore is to see that the *major* proposition be true, upon which the whole force of the argument usually depends.

## S E C T. VI.

### *Of compound Syllogisms.*

WE properly call those *compound syllogisms*, which are made of two or more *simple syllogisms*, and may be resolved into them. The chief kinds are these; *Epichirema*, *Dilemma*, *Prosyllogismus*, and *Sorites*.

I. *Epichirema* is a syllogism which contains the proof of the major or minor, or both, before it draws the conclusion. This is often used in writing, in publick speeches, and in common conversation; that so each part of the discourse may be confirmed and put out of doubt, as it moves on toward the conclusion, which was chiefly designed. Take this instance;

*Sickness may be good for us, for it weans us from the pleasures of life, and makes us think of dying;*

*But we are uneasy under sickness, which appears by our impatience, complaints, groanings, &c.*

*Therefore we are uneasy sometimes under that which is good for us.*

Another instance you may see in Cicero's oration in defence of Milo, who had slain Clodius His major proposition is, that it is *lawful for one man to kill*

kill another who lies in wait to kill him; which he proves from the custom of nations, from natural equity, examples, &c. his minor is, that Clodius laid wait for Milo; which he proves by his arms, guards, &c. and then infers the conclusion, that it was lawful for Milo to kill Clodius.

II. A dilemma, is an argument which divides the whole into all its parts or members by a disjunctive proposition, and then infers something concerning each part which is finally inferred concerning the whole. Instances of this are frequent; as, *In this life we must either obey our vicious inclinations, or resist them: To obey them, will bring sin and sorrow; to resist them is laborious and painful; Therefore we cannot be perfectly free from sorrow or pain in this life.*

A dilemma becomes faulty or ineffectual three ways: *First*, When the members of the division are not well opposed, or not fully enumerated; for then the major is false. *Secondly*, When what is asserted concerning each part is not just; for then the minor is not true. *Thirdly*, When it may be retorted with equal force upon him who utters it.

There was a famous ancient instance of this case, wherein a dilemma was retorted. Euathlus promised Protagoras a reward when he had taught him the art of pleading, and it was to be paid the first day that he gained any cause in the court. After a considerable time Protagoras goes to law with Euathlus for the reward, and uses this dilemma: *Either the cause will go on my side, or on yours; if the cause goes on my side, you must pay me according to the sentence of the judge: If the cause goes on your side, you must pay me according to your bargain: Therefore whether the cause goes for me or against me, you must pay me the reward* But Euathlus retorted the dilemma thus: *Either I shall gain the cause or lose it: If I gain the cause, then nothing will be due to you according to the sentence of the judge: But if I lose the cause, nothing will be due to you according to my bar-*

A a gain:

gain: Therefore *whether I lose or gain the cause, I will not pay you, for nothing will be due to you.*

Note 1. A dilemma is usually described as though it always proved the absurdity, inconvenience, or unreasonableness of some opinion or practice; and this is the most common design of it; but it is plain, that it may be also used to prove the truth or advantage of any thing proposed; as, *In heaven we shall either have desires or not: If we have no desires, then we have full satisfaction; if we have desires, they shall be satisfied as fast as they arise; Therefore in heaven we shall be compleatly satisfied.*

Note 2. This sort of argument may be composed of three or more members, and may be called a *trilemma*.

III. A *prosyllogism* is when two or more syllogisms are so connected together, that the conclusion of the former is the major or the minor of the following; as, *Blood cannot think; but the soul of man thinks; therefore the soul of man is not blood; but the soul of a brute is his blood, according to the scripture; therefore the soul of man is different from the soul of a brute.* See another instance in the introduction to this treatise, p. 11.

IV. A *sorites*, is when several middle terms are chosen to connect one another successively in several propositions, till the last proposition connects its predicate with the first subject. Thus, *All men of revenge have their souls often uneasy; uneasy souls are a plague to themselves; now to be one's own plague is folly in the extreme; therefore all men of revenge are extreme fools.*

The apostle, Rom. viii. 29. gives us an instance of this sort of argument, if it were reduced to exact form: *Whom he foreknew, those he predestinated; whom he predestinated, he called; whom he called, he justified; whom he justified, he glorified; therefore whom he foreknew, he glorified.*

To these syllogisms it may not be improper to add

add *induction*, which is, when from several particular propositions we infer one general; as, *The doctrine of the Socinians cannot be proved from the gospels, it cannot be proved from the Acts of the Apostles, it cannot be proved from the epistles, nor the book of Revelation; therefore it cannot be proved from the New Testament.*

*Note*, This sort of argument is often defective, because there is no due care taken to enumerate all the particulars on which the conclusion should depend.

All these four kinds of syllogisms in this section may be called *redundant*, because they have more than three propositions. But there is one sort of syllogism which is defective, and is called an *enthymem*, because only the conclusion with one of the premises is expressed, while the other is supposed and reserved in the mind; Thus, *There is no true religion without good morals; therefore a knave cannot be truly religious*: Or thus, *It is our duty to love our neighbours as ourselves; therefore there are but few who perform their duty.*

*Note*, This is the most common sort of argument amongst mankind both in writing and in speaking; for it would take up too much time, and too much retard the discourse to draw out all our arguments in mood and figure. Besides, mankind love to have so much compliment paid to their understandings, as to suppose that they know the *major* or *minor*, which is suppressed and implied, when you pronounce the other *premise* and the *conclusion*.

If there be any debate about this argument, the syllogism must be compleated in order to try its force and goodness, by adding the absent propositions.

## S E C T. VII.

*Of the middle Terms, of common Places or Topicks, and Invention of Arguments.*

THE next division of syllogisms is according to the *middle term*, which is made use of in the proof of the proposition. Now the middle term (as we have hinted before) is often called *argument*, because the force of the syllogism depends upon it. We must make a little delay here to treat briefly of the doctrine of *topicks*, or *places* whence *middle terms* or *arguments* are drawn.

All arts and sciences have some general subjects which belong to them, which are called *topicks*, or *common-places*; because middle terms are borrowed, and arguments derived from them for the proof of the various propositions which we have occasion to discourse of. The topicks of *grammar* are *etymology*, *noun*, *verb*, *construction*, *signification*, &c. The topicks of *logick* are *genus*, *species*, *difference*, *property*, *definition*, *division*, &c. The topicks of *ontology*, or *metaphysics*, are *cause*, *effect*, *action*, *passion*, *identity*, *opposition*, *subject*, *adjunct*, *sign*, &c. The topicks of *morality*, or *ethicks*, are *law*, *sin*, *duty*, *authority*, *freedom of will*, *command*, *threatening*, *reward*, *punishment*, &c. The topicks of *theology*, are *God*, *Christ*, *faith*, *hope*, *worship*, *salvation*, &c.

To these several *topicks* there belong particular observations, axioms, canons, or rules\*, which are laid down in their proper sciences; as,

*Grammar* hath such canons, namely, *Words in a different construction obtain a different sense. Words derived*

\* A *canon* is a proposition declaring some property of the subject, which is not expressed in the *definition* or *division* of it.



*rived from the same primitive may probably have some affinity in their original meaning, &c.*

Canons in *logick* are such as these, *Every part of a division singly taken must contain less than the whole. A definition must be peculiar and proper to the thing defined. Whatever is affirmed or denied of the genus, may be affirmed or denied of the species, &c.*

*Metaphysical* canons are such as these; *Final causes belong only to intelligent agents. If a natural and necessary cause operate, the effect will follow, &c.* and there are large catalogues of many more in each distinct science.

Now it has been the custom of those who teach *logick* or *rhetorick*, to direct their disciples when they want an argument, to consult the several *topics* which are suited to their subject of discourse, and to rummage over the *definitions, divisions, and canons*, that belong to each topic. This is called the *invention of argument*; and it is taught with much solemnity in some schools.

I grant there may be good use of this practice for persons of a lower genius, when they are to compose any discourse for the publick; or for those of superior parts, to refresh their memory, and revive their acquaintance with a subject which has been long absent from their thoughts, or when their natural spirits labour under indisposition and languor; but when a man of moderate sagacity has made himself master of his theme by just diligence and inquiry; he has seldom need to run knocking at the doors of all the *topicks* that he may furnish himself with argument or matter of speaking: And indeed it is only a man of sense and judgment that can use *common places* or *topicks* well; for amongst this variety he only knows what is fit to be left out, as well as what is fit to be spoken.

By some *logical* writers this business of *topicks* and *invention*, is treated of in such a manner with mathematical figures and diagrams, filled with the bar-

barous technical word, *Napcas*, *Nipcis*, *Roperos*, *Nofrop*, &c. as though an ignorant lad were to be led mechanically in certain artificial harneſſes and trammels to find out arguments to prove or refute any propoſition whatſoever, without any rational knowledge of the ideas. Now there is no need to throw words of contempt on ſuch a practice; the very deſcription of it carries reproof and ridicule in abundance.

## S E C T. VIII.

### *Of ſeveral Kinds of Arguments and Demonſtrations.*

**W**E proceed now to the *diviſion* of ſyllogiſms according to the *middle term*; and in this part of our treatiſe the ſyllogiſms themſelves are properly called *arguments*, and are thus diſtributed.

I. Arguments are called *grammatical*, *metaphyſical*, *phyſical*, *moral*, *mechanical*, *theological*, &c. according to the art, ſcience, or ſubject, whence the *middle term* or *topick* is borrowed. Thus, if we prove that *no man ſhould ſteal from his neighbour*, becauſe the *ſcripture* forbids it, this is a *theological* argument: If we prove it from the laws of the *land*, it is *political*; but if we prove it from the principles of *reaſon* and *equity*, the argument is *moral*.

II. Arguments are either *certain* and *evident*, or *doubtful* and *merely probable*.

*Probable arguments*, are thoſe whoſe concluſions are proved by ſome probable mediums; as, *This hill was once a church-yard, or a field of battle*, becauſe *there are many human bones found here*. This is not a certain argument, for human bones might have been conveyed there ſome other way.

*Evident* and *certain* arguments are called *demonſtrations*; for they prove their concluſions by clear mediums and undoubted principles; and they are generally divided into theſe two ſorts.

1. Demonstrations *a priori*, which prove the effect by its necessary cause; as, I prove *the scripture is infallibly true*, because it is *the word of God who cannot lie*.

2. Demonstrations *a posteriori*, which infer the cause from its necessary effect; as, *I infer there hath been the hand of some artificer here*, because *I find a curious engine*. Or, *I infer there is a God, from the works of his wisdom in the visible world*.

The last of these is called *demonstratio τῆς οὐσίας*, because it proves only the existence of a thing; the first is named *demonstratio τῆς οὐσιολογίας*, because it shews also the cause of existence.

But *note*, That though these two sorts of arguments are most peculiarly called *demonstrations*, yet generally any strong and convincing argument obtains that name; and it is the custom of mathematicians to call their arguments *demonstrations*, from what medium soever they derive them.

III. Arguments are divided into *artificial* and *inartificial*.

An *artificial* argument is taken from the nature and circumstances of the things; and if the argument be strong, it produces a *natural certainty*; as, *The world was first created by God*, because *nothing can create itself*.

An *inartificial* argument, is the testimony of another; and this is called *original*, when our information proceeds immediately from the persons concerned, or from eye or ear witnesses of a fact: It is called *tradition* when it is delivered by the report of others.

We have take notice before, that *testimony* is either *divine* or *human*. If the human testimony be strong, it produces a *moral certainty*; but divine testimony produces a *supernatural certainty*, which is far superior.

*Note*, Arguments taken from *human testimony*, as well as from *laws and rules of equity*, are called *moral*; and

and indeed the same name is also applied to every sort of argument which is drawn from the *free actions of God*, or the *contingent actions of men*, wherein we cannot arise to a *natural certainty*, but content ourselves with an *high degree of probability*, which in many cases is scarce inferior to *natural certainty*.

IV. Arguments are either *direct* or *indirect*. It is a *direct argument*, where the middle term is such as proves the question itself, and infers that very proposition which was the matter of inquiry. An *indirect*, or *oblique argument*, proves or refutes some other proposition, and thereby makes the thing inquired appear to be true by plain consequence.

Several arguments are called *indirect*; as, (1.) When some contradictory proposition is proved to be false, improbable or impossible: Or when upon supposition of the falshood, or denial of the original proposition, some absurdity is inferred. This is called a proof *per impossibile*, or a *reductio ad absurdum*. (2.) When some other proposition is proved to be true which is less probable, and thence it follows that the original proposition is true, because it is more probable. This is an argument *ex minus probabili ad magis*. (3.) When any other proposition is proved, upon which it was before agreed to yield the original question. This is an argument *ex concessio*.

V. There is yet another rank of arguments which have Latin names; their true distinction is derived from the topicks or middle terms which are used in them, though they are called an address to our judgment, our faith, our ignorance, our profession, our modesty, and our passions.

1. If an argument be taken from the nature or existence of things, and addressed to the *reason of mankind*, it is called *argumentum ad judicium*.

2. When it is borrowed from some convincing testimony, it is *argumentum ad fidem*, an address to our faith.

3. When

3. When it is drawn from any insufficient medium whatsoever, and yet the opposer has not skill to refute or answer it, this is *argumentum ad ignorantiam*, an address to our *ignorance*.

4. When it is built upon the professed principles or opinions of the person with whom we argue, whether the opinions be true or false, it is named *argumentum ad hominem*, an address to our *professed principles*. St. Paul often uses this argument when he reasons with the Jews, and when he says, *I speak as a man*.

5. When the argument is fetched from the sentiments of some wise, great, or good men, whose authority we reverence and dare hardly oppose, it is called *argumentum ad verecundiam*, an address to our *modesty*.

6. I add finally, When an argument is borrowed from any topicks which are suited to engage the inclinations and passions of the hearers on the side of the speaker, rather than to convince the judgment, this is *argumentum ad passiones*, an address to the *passions*; or if it be made publickly, it is called *ad populum*, or an *appeal to the people*.

After all these divisions of *sylogisms* or *arguments* arising from the *middle term*, there is one distinction proper to be mentioned which arises from the *premises*. An argument is called *uniform*, when both the premises are derived from the same spring of knowledge, whether it be *sense*, *reason*, *consciousness*, *human faith*, or *divine faith*: But when the two premises are derived from different springs of knowledge, it is called a *mixt argument*.

Whether the conclusion must be called *human* or *divine*, when one or both premises are matters of *divine faith*, but the conclusion is drawn by *human reason*, I leave to be disputed and determined in the *schools of theology*.

Thus the *second chapter* is finished, and a particular account given of all the *chief kinds of sylogisms* or arguments



arguments which are made use of among men, or treated of in *logick*, together with *special rules* for the formation of them, so far as is necessary.

If a syllogism agrees with the rules which are given for the construction and regulation of it, it is called a *true argument*: If it disagrees with these rules, it is a *paralogism*, or *false argument*: But when a false argument puts on the face and appearance of a true one, then it is properly called a *sophism* or *fallacy*, which shall be the subject of the next chapter.

### CH A P. III.

#### *The Doctrine of Sophisms.*

FROM truth nothing can really follow but what is *true*: Whensoever therefore we find a *false conclusion* drawn from premises which seem to be true, there must be some fault in the deduction or inference; or else one of the premises is not true in the sense in which it is used in that argument.

When an argument carries the face of truth with it, and yet leads us into mistake, it is a *sophism*; and there is some need of a particular description of these fallacious arguments, that we may with more ease and readiness detect and solve them.

#### S E C T. I.

##### *Of several Kinds of Sophisms, and their Solution.*

AS the rules of *right judgment*, and of *good ratiocination*, often coincide with each other, so the doctrine of *prejudices*, which was treated of in the *second part of logick*, has anticipated a great deal of

of what might be said on the subject of *sophisms*; yet I shall mention the most remarkable springs of *false argumentation*, which are reduced by logicians to some of the following heads.

I. The first sort of sophism is called *ignoratio elenchi*, or a mistake of the *question*; that is, when something else is proved which has neither any necessary connexion or consistency with the thing inquired, and consequently gives no determination to the inquiry, though it may seem at first sight to determine the question; as, if any should conclude that St. Paul was not a *native Jew*, by proving that he was born a *Roman*; or if they should pretend to determine that he was neither *Roman* nor *Jew*, by proving that he was born at Tarsus in Cilicia: These sophisms are refuted by shewing that all these three may be true; for he was born of *Jewish parents* in the city of *Tarsus*, and by some peculiar privilege granted to his parents, or his native city, he was born a denizen of Rome. Thus there is neither of these three characters of the apostle inconsistent with each other, and therefore the proving one of them true does not refute the others.

Or if the question be proposed, *Whether excess of wine can be hurtful to him that drinks it?* And the sophister should prove that it revives his *spirits*, it exhilarates his *soul*, it gives a man *courage*, and makes him *strong* and *active*; and then he takes it for granted that he has proved his point.

But the respondent may easily shew, that though wine may do all this, yet it may be *finally hurtful both to the soul and body of him that drinks it to excess*.

Disputers when they grow warm, are ready to run into this fallacy: They dress up the opinion of their adversary as they please, and ascribe sentiments to him which he doth not acknowledge; and when they have with a great deal of pomp attacked and confounded these images of straw of their own making,

making, they triumph over their adversary as though they had utterly confuted his opinion.

It is a fallacy of the same kind which a disputant is guilty of, when he finds that his adversary is too hard for him, and that he cannot fairly prove the question first proposed; he then with slyness and subtilty turns the discourse aside to some other kindred point which he can prove, and exults in that new argument wherein his opponent never contradicted him.

The way to prevent this *fallacy* is by keeping the eye fixt on the precise point of dispute, and neither wandering from it ourselves, nor suffering our antagonist to wander from it, or substitute any thing else in its room.

II. The next sophism is called *petitio principii*, or a *supposition of what is not granted*; that is, when any proposition is proved by the same proposition in other words, or by something that is equally uncertain and disputed: As if any one undertake to prove that the *human soul is extended through all the parts of the body, because it resides in every member*, which is but the same thing in other words. Or, if a Papist should pretend to prove that *his religion is the only catholic religion; and is derived from Christ and his apostles, because it agrees with the doctrine of all the fathers of the church, all the holy martyrs, and all the Christian world throughout all ages*: Whereas this is the great point in contest, whether their religion *does* agree with that of all the antients and the primitive Christians, or no.

III. That sort of *fallacy* which is called a *circle*, is very near akin to the *petitio principii*; as when one of the premises in a syllogism is questioned and opposed, and we intend to prove it by the conclusion: Or, when in a train of syllogisms we prove the last by recurring to what was the conclusion of the first: The Papists are famous at this sort of fallacy, when they *prove the scriptures to be the word of God by*  
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*the authority or infallible testimony of their church; and when they are called to shew the infallible authority of their church, they pretend to prove it by the scriptures.*

IV. The next kind of sophism is called *non causa pro causa*, or the *assignation of a false cause*. This the peripatetick philosophers were guilty of continually, when they told us that certain beings, which they called *substantial forms*, were the springs of colour, motion, vegetation, and the various operations of natural beings in the animate and inanimate world; when they informed us that *nature was terribly afraid of a vacuum*, and that this was the cause why the water would not fall out of a long tube if it was turned upside down: The *moderns* as well as the *ancients* fall often into this fallacy, when they positively assign the reasons of natural appearances, without sufficient experiments to prove them.

*Astrologers* are overrun with this sort of fallacies, and they cheat the people grossly by pretending to *tell fortunes*, and to deduce the cause of the various occurrences in the lives of men from the *various position of the stars and planets*, which they call *aspects*.

When *comets* and *eclipses* of the *sun* and *moon* are construed to signify the *fate* of princes, the *revolution* of states, famine, wars and calamities of all kinds, it is a fallacy, that belongs to this rank of sophisms.

There is scarce any thing more common in human life than this sort of deceitful argument. If any two accidental events happen to concur, one is presently made the cause of the other. If *Titius* wronged his neighbour of a guinea, and in six months after, he fell down and broke his leg, weak men will impute it to the divine vengeance on *Titius* for his former injustice. This sophism was found also in the early days of the world: For when holy *Job* was surrounded with uncommon miseries, his own friends inferred, that he was a most heinous criminal, and charged him with aggravated guilt as the cause of his

*calamities*; though God himself by a voice from heaven solved this uncharitable sophism, and cleared his servant Job of that charge.

How frequent is it among men to impute crimes to wrong persons? We too often charge that upon the wicked contrivance and premeditated malice of a neighbour, which arose merely from ignorance, or from unguarded temper. And on the other hand, when we have a mind to excuse ourselves, we practise the same sophism, and charge that upon our inadvertence or our ignorance, which perhaps was designed wickedness. What is really done by a necessity of circumstances, we sometimes impute to choice. And again, we charge that upon necessity which was really desired and chosen.

Sometimes a person acts out of judgment, in opposition to his inclination; another person perhaps acts the same thing out of inclination, and against his judgment. It is hard for us to determine with assurance, what are the inward springs and secret causes of every man's conduct; and therefore we should be cautious and slow in passing a judgment where the case is not exceeding evident: And if we should mistake, let it rather be on the charitable, than on the censorious side.

It is the same *sophism* that charges *mathematical learning with leading the minds of men to scepticism and infidelity*, and as unjustly accuses the *new philosophy of paving the way to heresy and schism*. Thus the *reformation from Popery* has been charged with the *murder and blood of millions*, which in truth is to be imputed to the *tyranny of the princes and the priests*, who would not suffer the people to reform their sentiments and their practices according to the word of God. Thus *Christianity* in the primitive ages was charged by the *Heathens* with all the calamities which befel the Roman empire, because the Christians renounced the heathen gods and idols.

The way to relieve ourselves from those sophisms,  
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and to secure ourselves from the danger of falling into them, is an honest and diligent enquiry into the real nature and causes of things, with a constant watchfulness against all those prejudices that might warp the judgment aside from truth in that inquiry.

V. The next is called *fallacia accidentis*, or a sophism wherein we pronounce concerning the *nature and essential properties* of any subject according to something which is merely *accidental* to it. This is akin to the former, and is also very frequent in human life. So if *opium* or the *Peruvian bark* has been used imprudently or unsuccessfully, whereby the patient has received injury, some weaker people absolutely pronounce against the use of the *bark* or *opium* upon all occasions whatsoever, and are ready to call them *poison*. So *wine* has been the accidental occasion of *drunkenness* and *quarrels*; *learning* and *printing* may have been the accidental cause of *sedition* in a state; the *reading of the bible*, by accident has been used to promote *heresies* or *destructive errors*; and for these reasons they have been all pronounced *evil things*. Mahomet forbade his followers the use of *wine*; the Turks discourage *learning* in their dominions; and the Papists forbid the *scriptures* to be read by the *laity*. But how very unreasonable are these inferences, and these prohibitions which are built upon them!

VI. The next *sophism* borders upon the former; and that is, when we argue from that which is true in *particular circumstances*, to prove the same thing true *absolutely, simply, and abstracted from all circumstances*; this is called in the schools a *sophism à dicto secundum quid ad dictum simpliciter*; as, *That which is bought in the shambles is eaten for dinner*; *Raw meat is bought in the shambles*; therefore *raw meat is eaten for dinner*. Or thus, *Livy writes fables and improbabilities when he describes prodigies and omens*; therefore *Livy's Roman history is never to be believed in any thing*. Or thus, *There may be some mistakes of transcribers in*

*some part of the scriptures; therefore scripture alone is not a safe guide for our faith.*

This sort of sophism has its *reverse* also; as when we argue from that which is true *simply* and *absolutely*, to prove the same thing true in *all particular circumstances whatsoever* \*; as if a traitor should argue from the sixth commandment, *Thou shalt not kill a man*, to prove that *he himself ought not to be hanged*: Or if a madman should tell me, *I ought not to withhold his sword from him, because no man ought to withhold the property of another*.

These two last species of *sophisms* are easily solved, by shewing the difference betwixt things in their *absolute nature*, and the same things surrounded with *peculiar circumstances*, and considered in regard to special times, places, persons and occasions; or by shewing the difference between a *moral* and a *metaphysical universality*, and that the proposition will hold good in one case, but not in the other.

VII. The *sophisms of composition and division* come next to be mentioned.

The *sophism of composition*, is when we infer any thing concerning ideas in a *compounded sense*, which is only true in a *divided sense*. And when it is said in the gospel that *Christ made the blind to see, and the deaf to hear, and the lame to walk*, we ought not to infer hence that *Christ performed contradictions*; but those who *were blind before*, were made to see, and those who *were deaf before*, were made to hear, &c. So when the scripture assures us, *The worst of sinners may be saved*; it signifies only, that *they who have been the worst of sinners* may repent and be saved, not that they shall be saved in their sins. Or if any one should argue thus, *Two and three are even and odd*;

\* This is arguing from a *moral universality*, which admits of some exceptions, in the same manner as may be argued from *metaphysical* or a *natural universality*, which admits of no exception.

*odd; Five are two and three; therefore five are even and odd.* Here that is very falsely inferred concerning *two and three in union*, which is only true of them divided.

The *sophism of division*, is when we infer the same thing concerning ideas in a *divided sense*, which is only true in a *compounded sense*; as, if we should pretend to prove that *every soldier in the Grecian army put an hundred thousand Persians to flight*, because the *Grecian soldiers did so*. Or if a man should argue thus, *Five is one number; Two and three are five; therefore two and three are one number*.

This sort of *sophism* is committed when the word *All* is taken in a *collective* and a *distributive sense*, without a due distinction; as, if any one should reason thus; *All the musical instruments of the Jewish temple made a noble concert; The harp was a musical instrument of the Jewish temple; therefore the harp made a noble concert*. Here the word *All* in the major is *collective*, whereas such a conclusion requires that the word *All* should be *distributive*.

It is the same fallacy when the universal word *All* or *No* refers to *species* in one proposition, and to *individuals* in another; as, *All animals were in Noah's ark; therefore No animals perished in the flood*: Whereas in the premise *all animals* signifies *every kind of animals*, which does not exclude or deny the drowning of a thousand *individuals*.

VIII. The last sort of *sophism* arises from our *abuse of the ambiguity of words*, which is the largest and most extensive kind of fallacy; and indeed several of the former fallacies might be reduced to this head.

When the words or phrases are *plainly equivocal*, they are called *sophisms of equivocation*; as, if we should argue thus: *He that sends forth a book into the light, desires it to be read; He that throws a book into the fire, sends it into the light; therefore He that throws a book into the fire desires it to be read*.

This *sophism*, as well as the foregoing, and all of the like nature, are solved by shewing the different senses of the words, terms or phrases. Here *light* in the major proposition signifies the *publick view of the world*; in the minor it signifies the *brightness of flame and fire*; and therefore the syllogism has *four* terms, or rather, it has no *middle term*, and proves nothing.

But where such *gross equivocations* and *ambiguities* appear in arguments, there is little danger of imposing upon ourselves or others. The greatest danger, and which we are perpetually exposed to in reasoning, is, where the *two* senses or significations of *one* term are near akin, and not plainly distinguished, and yet they are really sufficiently different in their sense, to lead us into great mistakes, if we are not watchful. And indeed the greatest part of controversies in the sacred or civil life, arise from the different senses that are put upon words, and the different ideas which are included in them; as have been shewn at large in the FIRST PART OF LOGICK, chap. IV. which treats of *words and terms*.

There is after all these, another sort of *sophism* which is wont to be called an *imperfect enumeration*, or a *false induction*, when from a few experiments or observations men infer general theorems and universal propositions. But this is sufficiently noticed in the foregoing chapter, where we treated of that sort of syllogism which is called *induction*.

## S E C T. II.

*Two general Tests of true Syllogisms, and Methods of solving all Sophisms.*

BESIDES the special description of *true syllogisms* and *sophisms* already given, and the *rules* by which the one are framed, and the other refuted, there

there are these two *general methods* of reducing all syllogisms whatsoever to a *test* of their truth or falshood.

I. The first is, that the *premises must*, at least implicitly, *contain the conclusion*; or thus, *One of the premises must contain the conclusion, and the other must shew that the conclusion is contained in it.* The reason of this rule is this; when any proposition is offered to be proved, it is necessary to find another proposition which confirms it, which may be called the *containing proposition*; but because the second must not contain the first in an express manner, and in the same words \*, therefore it is necessary that a third or *ostensive* proposition be found out, to shew that the second proposition contains the first, which was to be proved. Let us make an experiment of this syllogism: *Whosoever is a slave to his natural inclinations is miserable; The wicked man is a slave to his natural inclinations; therefore The wicked man is miserable.* Here it is evident that the major proposition contains the conclusion; for under the general character of a *slave to natural inclinations*, a *wicked man* is contained or included; and the minor proposition declares it; whence the *conclusion* is evidently deduced, that *the wicked man is miserable.*

In many *affirmative* syllogisms we may suppose either the major or the minor to contain the conclusion, and the other to shew it; for there is no great difference. But in *negative* syllogisms it is the negative proposition that contains the conclusion, and the affirmative proposition shews it; as, *Every wise man masters his passions; No angry man masters his passions; therefore No angry man is wise.* Here

\* It is confessed that *conditional* and *disjunctive* major propositions do expressly contain all that is in the conclusion; but then it is not in a *certain* and *conclusive manner*, but only in a *dubious* form of speech, and mingled with other terms; and therefore it is not the *same express proposition.*



Here it is more natural to suppose the minor to be the *contained proposition*; it is the minor implicitly denies *wisdom* concerning an *angry man*, because *mastering the passions* is included in *wisdom*, and the major shews it.

*Note*, This rule may be applied to *complex* and *conjunctive*, as well as *simple* syllogisms, and is adapted to shew the truth or falshood of any of them.

II. The second is this; *As the terms in every syllogism are usually repeated twice, so they must be taken precisely in the same sense in both places*: For the greatest part of mistakes that arise in forming syllogisms, is derived from some little difference in the sense of one of the terms in the two parts of the syllogism wherein it is used. Let us consider the following *sophisms*.

1. *It is a sin to kill a man; A murderer is a man; therefore It is a sin to kill a murderer.* Here the word *kill* in the first proposition signifies *to kill unjustly, or without law*; in the conclusion it is taken absolutely for *putting a man to death in general*, and therefore the inference is not good.

2. *What I am, you are not; but I am a man; therefore You are not a man.* This is a *relative syllogism*: But if it be reduced to a regular *categorical* form, it will appear there is ambiguity in the terms, thus; *What I am, is a man; You are not what I am; therefore you are not a man.* Here *what I am* in the major proposition is taken *specially for my nature*; but in the minor proposition the same words are taken *individually for my person*; therefore the inference must be false, for the syllogism does not take the term *what I am* both times in the same sense.

3. *He that says you are an animal says true; but He that says you are a goose, says you are an animal; therefore He that says you are a goose, says true.* In the major proposition the word *animal* is the predicate of an *incidental proposition*; which incidental proposition being affirmative, renders the predicate of it particular.

particular, according to chap. II. sect. 2. axiom 3. and consequently the word *animal* there signifies only *human animality*. In the minor proposition the word *animal*, for the same reason, signifies the *animality of a goose*; whereby it becomes an *ambiguous* term, and unfit to build the conclusion upon. Or if you say, the word *animal* in the minor, is taken for *human animality*, then the minor is evidently *false*.

It is from this last *general test* of syllogisms that we derive the custom of the *respondent* in answering the arguments of the *opponent*, which is to distinguish upon the major or minor proposition, and declare which term is used in two senses, and in what sense the proposition may be true, and in what sense it is false.

## C H A P. IV.

### *Some General RULES to direct our Reasoning.*

**M**OST of the *general* and *special* directions given to form our judgments aright in the preceding part of *logick* might be rehearsed here; for the *judgments* which we pass upon things are generally built on some secret *reasoning* or *argument* by which the proposition is supposed to be proved. But there may be yet some farther assistances given to our *reasoning powers* in their search after truth, and an observation of the following *rules* will be of great importance for that end.

**RULE I.** "Accustom yourselves to clear and  
 " distinct ideas, to evident propositions, to strong  
 " and convincing arguments." converse much  
 with those friends, and those books, and those  
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parts of learning, where you meet with the greatest clearness of thought, and force of reasoning. The *mathematical sciences*, and particularly *arithmetick*, *geometry*, and *mechanicks*, abound with these advantages: And if there were nothing valuable in them for the uses of human life, yet the very speculative parts of this sort of learning are well worth our study; for by perpetual examples they teach us to conceive with clearness, to connect our ideas and propositions in a train of dependence, to reason with strength and demonstration, and to distinguish between truth and falshood. Something of these sciences should be studied by every man who pretends to learning, and that, as Mr. Locke expresses it, *not so much to make us mathematicians, as to make us reasonable creatures.*

We should gain such a familiarity with evidence of perception and force of reasoning, and get such a habit of discerning clear truths, that the mind may be soon offended with obscurity and confusion: Then we shall, as it were, naturally and with ease restrain our minds from rash judgment, before we attain just evidence of the proposition which is offered to us; and we shall with the same ease, and, as it were naturally, seize and embrace every truth that is proposed with just evidence.

The habit of *conceiving clearly*, of *judging justly*, and of *reasoning well*, is not to be attained merely by the happiness of constitution, the brightness of genius, the best natural parts, or the best collection of logical precepts: It is *custom* and *practice* that must form and establish this habit. We must apply ourselves to it till we perform all this readily, and without reflecting on rules. A *coherent thinker*, and a *strict reasoner* is not to be made at once by a set of rules, any more than a *good painter* or *musician* may be formed extempore, by an excellent lecture on musick or painting. It is of infinite importance therefore in our younger years to be taught both  
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the *value* and the *practice* of conceiving clearly and reasoning right: For when we are grown up to the middle of life, or past it, it is no wonder that we should not learn good reasoning, any more than that an ignorant clown should not be able to learn fine language, dancing, or a courtly behaviour, when his rustick airs have grown up with him till the age of forty.

For want of this care, some persons of rank and education dwell all their days among obscure ideas; they conceive and judge always in confusion, they take weak arguments for demonstration, they are led away with the disguises and shadows of truth. Now if such persons happen to have a bright imagination, a volubility of speech, and a copiousness of language, they not only impose many errors upon their own understandings, but they stamp the image of their own mistakes upon their neighbours also, and spread their errors abroad.

It is a matter of just lamentation and pity, to consider the weakness of the common multitude of mankind in this respect, how they receive any thing into their assent upon the most trifling grounds. True reasoning hath very little share in forming their opinions. They resist the most convincing arguments by an obstinate adherence to their prejudices, and believe the most improbable things with the greatest assurance. They talk of the abstrusest mysteries, and determine upon them with the utmost confidence, and without just evidence either from reason or revelation. A confused heap of dark and inconsistent ideas, make up a good part of their knowledge in matters of *philosophy* as well as *religion*, having never been taught the use and value of *clear* and *just reasoning*.

Yet it must be still confessed that there are some *mysteries in religion*, both *natural* and *revealed*, as well as some *abstruse points in philosophy*, wherein the wise as well as the unwise must be content with obscure ideas.

ideas. There are several things, especially relating to the invisible world, which are unsearchable in our present state, and therefore we must believe what revelation plainly dictates, though the ideas may be obscure. Reason itself demands this of us; but we should seek for the brightest evidence both of the ideas, and of the connexion of them, wheresoever it is attainable.

RULE II. "Enlarge your general acquaintance with things daily, in order to attain a rich furniture of topicks, or middle terms, whereby those propositions which occur may be either proved or disproved; but especially meditate and inquire with great diligence and exactness into the nature, properties, circumstances, and relations of the particular subject about which you judge or argue." Consider its causes, effects, consequences, adjuncts, opposites, signs, &c. so far as is needful to your present purpose. You should survey a question round about, and on all sides, and extend your views as far as possible to every thing that has a connexion with it. This practice has many advantages in it; as,

1. It will be a means to suggest to your mind proper *topicks* for argument about any *proposition* that relates to the same subject.

2. It will enable you with greater readiness and justness of thought to give an answer to any sudden question upon that subject, whether it arises in your own mind, or is proposed by others.

3. This will instruct you to give a plainer and speedier solution of any difficulties that may attend the theme of your discourse, and to refute the objections of those who have espoused a contrary opinion.

4. By such a large survey of the whole subject in all its properties and relations, you will be better secured from inconsistencies, that is, from asserting or denying any thing in one place, which contradicts



dicts what you have asserted or denied in another: And to attain these ends, an extensiveness of understanding, and a large memory, are of unspeakable service.

One would be ready to wonder sometimes how easily great and wise and learned men are led into assertions in some parts of the same treatise, which are found to be scarce consistent with what they have asserted in other places: But the true reason is, the *narrowness of the mind of man*, that it cannot take in all the innumerable properties and relations of one subject with a single view; and therefore whilst they are intent on *one particular part* of their theme, they bend all their force of thought to prove or disprove some proposition that relates to that part, without a sufficient attention to the *consequences* which may flow from it, and which may unhappily affect another part of the same subject; and by this means they are sometimes led to say things which are inconsistent. In such a case, the great dealers in dispute and controversy take pleasure to cast *nonsense* and *self-contradiction* on their antagonist, with huge and hateful reproaches. For my part, I rather choose to pity human nature, whose necessary narrowness of understanding exposes us all to some degrees of this frailty. But the most extensive survey possible of our whole subject is the best remedy against it. It is our judging and arguing upon a partial view of things, that exposes us to mistakes, and pushes us into absurdities, or at least to the very borders of them.

RULE III. "In searching the knowledge of things  
 " always keep the precise point of the present question in your eye. 'Take heed that you add nothing to it while you are arguing, nor omit any part of it.' Watch carefully lest any new ideas slide in to ming'le themselves either with the *subject* or the *predicate*. See that the question be not altered by the ambiguity of any word taken in different  
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senses; nor let any secret prejudices of your own, or the sophistical arts of others, cheat your understanding by changing the question, or shuffling in any thing else in its room.

And for this end it is useful to keep the precise matter of inquiry as *simple* as may be, and *disengaged from a complication of ideas*, which do not necessarily belong to it. By admitting a complication of ideas, and taking too many things at once into one question, the mind is sometimes dazzled and bewildered; and the truth is lost in such a variety and confusion of ideas; whereas by limiting and narrowing the question, you take a fuller survey of the whole of it.

By keeping the single point of inquiry in our constant view, we shall be secured from sudden, rash, and impertinent responses and determinations, which some have obtruded instead of solutions and solid answers, before they perfectly knew the questions.

RULE IV. "When you have exactly considered  
 " the precise point of inquiry, or what is unknown  
 " in the question, then consider what, and how  
 " much you know already of this question, or of  
 " the ideas and terms of which it is composed." It is by a comparison of the known and unknown parts of the question together, that you find what reference the part known hath unto, or what connexion it hath with the thing that is sought: Those ideas, whereby the known and unknown parts of the question are connected, will furnish you with middle terms or arguments whereby the thing proposed may be proved or disproved.

In this part of your work, namely, *comparing ideas together*, take due time, and be not too hasty to come to a determination, especially in points of importance. Some men, when they see a little agreement or disagreement between ideas, they presume a great deal, and so jump into the conclusion: This is a  
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short way to fancy, opinion, and conceit, but a most unsafe and uncertain way to true knowledge and wisdom.

RULE V. "In choosing your middle terms or arguments to prove any question, always take such topicks as are surest, and least fallible, and which carry the greatest evidence and strength with them." Be not so solicitous about the number, as the weight of your arguments, especially in proving any proposition which admits of *natural certainty*, or of *complete demonstration*. Many times we do injury to a cause by dwelling upon trifling arguments. We amuse our hearers with uncertainties, by multiplying the number of feeble reasonings, before we mention those which are more substantial, conclusive, and convincing. And too often we yield up our own assent to mere probable arguments, where certain proofs may be obtained.

Yet it must be confessed, there are many cases wherein the growing number of *probable arguments* increases the degree of probability, and gives a great and sufficient confirmation to the truth which is sought; as,

(1.) When we are inquiring the true sense of any word or phrase, we are more confirmed in the signification of it, by finding the same expression so used in several authors, or in several places of the same author.

(2.) When we are searching out the true meaning or opinion of any writer, or inquiring into any sacred doctrine of scripture, we come to a surer determination of the truth by several distinct places wherein the same thing is expressed or plainly implied; because it is not so probable that an honest skilful reader should mistake the meaning of [the writer in many places, as he may in one or two.

(3.) When we would prove the importance of any scriptural doctrine or duty, the multitude of texts wherein it is repeated and inculcated upon the reader,

der, seems naturally to instruct us that it is a matter of greater importance, than other things which are but slightly or singly mentioned in the bible.

(4.) In searching out matters of fact in times past, or in distant places, in which case *moral evidence* is sufficient, and *moral certainty* is the utmost which can be attained, here we derive a greater assurance of the truth of it by a number of persons, or a multitude of circumstances concurring to bear witness to it.

(5.) From many experiments in natural philosophy we more safely infer a general theorem, than we can from one or two.

(6.) In matters which require present practice, both sacred and civil, we must content ourselves oftentimes with a mere preponderation of probable reasons or arguments. Where there are several reasons on each side, for and against a thing that is to be done or omitted, a small argument added to the heap may justly turn the balance on one side, and determine the judgment, as I have noted in the *Second Part of Logick*.

To conclude; a growing acquaintance with matters of learning, and a daily improvement of our understandings in affairs human and divine, will best teach us to judge and distinguish in what cases the number of arguments adds to their weight and force: It is only experience can fully inform us when we must be determined by *probable topicks*, and when we must seek and expect *demonstrations*.

RULE VI. "Prove your conclusion (as far as possible) by some propositions that are in themselves more plain, evident, and certain than the conclusion; or at least such as are more known and more intelligible to the person whom you would convince." If we neglect this *rule*, we shall endeavour to enlighten that which is obscure by something equally or more obscure, and to confirm that which is doubtful by something equally or more uncertain. Common sense dictates to all men, that  
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it is impossible to establish any truth, and to convince others of it, but by something that is better known to them than that truth is.

RULE VII. "Labour in all your arguings to enlighten the understanding, as well as to conquer and captivate the judgment." Argue in such a manner as may give a natural, distinct, and solid knowledge of things to your hearers, as well as to force their assent by a mere proof of the question. Now to attain this end, the chief topick or medium of your demonstration should be fetched, as much as possible, from the nature of the thing to be proved, or from those things which are most naturally connected with it.

Geometricians sometimes break this rule without necessity, two ways; namely,

1. When they prove one proposition only by shewing what absurdities will follow if the contradictory proposition be supposed or admitted: This is called *reductio ad absurdum*\*, or *demonstratio per impossibile*; as for instance, When they prove all the radii of a circle to be equal, by supposing one radius to be longer or shorter than another, and then shewing what absurd consequences will follow. This, I confess, forces the assent, but it does not enlighten the mind by shewing the true reason and cause why all radii are equal, which is derived from the very construction of a circle: For since a circle is formed by fixing one end of a straight line in the cen-

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ter,

\* Note, This rule chiefly refers to the establishment of some truth, rather than to the refutation of error; it is a very common and usual way of arguing, to refute a false proposition, by shewing what evident falshood or absurdity will follow from it: For what proposition soever is really absurd and false, does effectually prove that principle to be false from which it is derived; so that this way of refuting an error is not so usually called *reductio ad absurdum*.



ter, and moving the other end round, (or which is all one, by compasses kept open to a certain extent) it follows evidently that every part of the circumference being thus described, must be equally distant from the center, and therefore the *radii*, which are lines from the center to the circumference, *must be all equal*.

2. Geometricians forget this rule when they heap up many far-fetched lines, figures, and proportions to prove some plain, simple, and obvious proposition. This is called *demonstratio per aliena et remota*, or an argument from unnatural and remote mediums: As if, in order to prove *the radii of a circle are all equal*, I should make several triangles and squares about the circle, and then from some properties and proportions of squares and triangles, prove that *the radii of a circle are equal*.

Yet it must be confessed, that sometimes such questions happen, that it is hardly possible to prove them by *direct arguments* drawn from the nature of things, &c. and then it may not only be lawful but necessary to use *indirect proofs*, and arguments drawn from *remote mediums*, or from the *absurdity of the contrary suppositions*.

Such indirect and remote arguments may also be sometimes used to confirm a proposition, which has been before proved by arguments more direct and immediate.

RULE VIII. " Though arguments should give  
" light to the subject, as well as constrain the as-  
" sent, yet you must learn to distinguish well be-  
" tween an explication and an argument; and nei-  
" ther impose upon yourselves, nor suffer your-  
" selves to be imposed upon by others, by mistak-  
" ing a mere illustration for a convincing reason."

*Axioms* themselves, or self-evident propositions, may want an *explication* or *illustration*, though they are not to be proved by reasoning.

*Similitudes* and *allusions* have oftentimes a very happy

happy influence to explain some difficult truth, and to render the idea of it familiar and easy. Where the resemblance is just and accurate, the influence of a *simile* may proceed so far as to shew the possibility of the thing in question: But similitudes must not be taken as a solid proof of the truth or existence of those things to which they have a resemblance. A too great deference paid to similitudes, or an utter rejection of them, seem to be two extremes, and ought to be avoided. The late ingenious Mr. Locke, even in his inquiries after truth, makes great use of *similes* for frequent illustration, and is very happy in the invention of them; though he warns us also lest we mistake them for conclusive arguments.

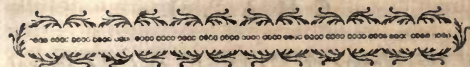
Yet let it be noted here, that a *parable* or a *similitude* used by an author, may give a sufficient proof of the true sense and meaning of that author, provided that he draw not this similitude beyond the scope and design for which it was brought; as, when our Saviour affirms, *Rev. iii. 3. I will come on thee as a thief*; this will plainly prove that he describes the *unexpectedness* of his appearance, though it is by no means to be drawn to signify any *injustice* in his design.

RULE IX. "In your whole course of reasoning  
 " keep your mind sincerely intent on the pursuit  
 " of truth; and follow solid argument whereso-  
 " ever it leads you. Let not a *party spirit*, nor any  
 " *passion* or *prejudice* whatsoever, stop or avert the  
 " current of your reasoning in quest of true know-  
 " ledge."

When you are inquiring therefore into any subject, maintain a due regard to the *arguments* and *objections* on both sides of a question: Consider, compare, and balance them well before you determine for one side. It is a frequent, but a very faulty practice, to hunt after arguments only to make good one side of a question, and entirely to neglect  
 and

and refuse those which favour the other side. If we have not given a due weight to arguments on both sides, we do but wilfully misguide our judgment, and abuse our reason, by forbidding its search after truth. When we espouse opinions by a secret bias on the mind, through the influence of *fear, hope, honour, credit, interest*, or any other *prejudice*, and then seek arguments only to support those opinions, we have neither done our duty to God nor to ourselves; and it is a matter of mere chance if we stumble upon truth in our way to ease and preferment. The *power of reasoning* was given us by our Maker for this very end, *to pursue truth*; and we abuse one of his richest gifts, if we basely yield it up to be led astray by any of the meaner powers of nature, or the perishing interests of this life. *Reason* itself, if honestly obeyed, will lead us to receive the divine *revelation* of the gospel, where it is duly proposed, and this will shew us the path of life everlasting.

THE



T H E  
F O U R T H P A R T  
O F  
L O G I C K.



Of DISPOSITION *and* METHOD.

**I**T is not merely a *clear and distinct idea*, a *well formed proposition*, or a *just argument*, that is sufficient to search out and communicate the knowledge of a subject. There must be a variety and series of them disposed in a due manner, in order to attain this end: And therefore it is the design of the *last part of LOGICK* to teach us the *art of method*. It is that must secure our thoughts from that confusion, darkness, and mistake, which unavoidably attend the meditations and discourses even of the brightest genius who despises the rules of it.

I. We shall here consider the *nature of method*, and the *several kinds of it*.

II. Lay down the *general rules of method*, with a few particulars under them.

## C H A P. I.

*Of the Nature of METHOD, and the several Kinds of it, namely. Natural and Arbitrary, Synthetick and Analytick.*

**M**ETHOD, taken in the largest sense, implies the placing of several things, or performing several operations, in such an order, as is most convenient to attain some end proposed: And in this sense it is applied to all the works of nature and art, to all the divine affairs of creation and providence; and to the artifices, schemes, contrivances and practices of mankind, whether in natural, civil, or sacred affairs.

Now this orderly disposition of things includes the ideas of *prior, posterior, and simultaneous*; of *superior, inferior, and equal*; of *beginning, end, and middle*, &c. which are described more particularly among the *general affections of being, in ontology*.

But in *logick* method is usually taken in a more limited sense, and the nature of it is thus described: *Method is the disposition of a variety of thoughts on any subject in such order as may best serve to find out unknown truths, to explain and confirm truths that are known, or to fix them in the memory.*

It is distributed into two general kinds, namely, *natural and arbitrary*.

*Natural method* is that which observes the order of nature, and proceeds in such a manner as that the knowledge of the things which follow, depends in a great measure on the things which go before, and this is twofold, *viz. synthetick and analytick* \*.

*Synthetick*

\* The word *analysis* has three or four senses, which it may not be improper to take notice of here.

1. It



*Synthetic method* is that which begins with the parts †, and leads onward to the knowledge of the whole; it begins with the most simple principles, and general truths, and proceeds by degrees to that

1. It signifies the general and particular heads of a discourse, with their mutual connections, both co-ordinate and subordinate, drawn out by way of abstract into one or more tables, which are frequently placed like an *index* at the beginning or end of a book.

2. It signifies the resolving of a discourse into its various subjects and arguments, as when any writing of the ancient prophets is resolved into the *prophetical, historical, doctrinal, and practical* parts of it; it is said to be *analysed in general*. When a sentence is distinguished into the *nouns, the verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and other particles* of speech, which compose it, then it is said to be *analysed grammatically*. When the same sentence is distinguished into *subject and predicate, proposition, argument, act, object, cause, effect, adjunct, opposite, &c.* then it is *analysed logically and metaphysically*. This last is what is chiefly meant in the *theological* schools, when they speak of *analysing a text of scripture*.

3. *Analysis* signifies particularly the science of *algebra*, wherein a question being proposed, one or more letters, as, *x, y, z,* or vowels, as, *a, e, i,* &c. are made use of to signify the unknown number, which being intermingled with several known numbers in the question, is at last by the rules of art separated or released from that entanglement, and its particular value is found out by shewing its *equation*, or equality to some known number.

4. It signifies *analytical method*, as here explained in *logick*.

† *Note*, It is confessed that *synthesis* often begins with the *genus*, and proceeds to the *species* and *individuals*. But the *genus* or *generic nature* is then considered only as a *physical or essential part* of the *species*, though it be sometimes called an *universal or logical whole*. Thus *synthetic method* maintains its own description still, for it begins with the *parts*, and proceeds to the *whole*, which is composed of them.

that which is drawn from them, or compounded of them: And therefore it is called the *method of composition*.

*Analytick method* takes the whole compound as it finds it, whether it be a *species* or an *individual*, and leads us into the knowledge of it by resolving it into its first principles or parts, its generick nature, and its special properties; and therefore it is called the *method of resolution*.

As *synthetick method* is generally used in teaching the sciences after they are invented, so *analytick* is most practised in finding out things unknown. Though it must be confessed that both methods are sometimes employed to find out truth and to communicate it.

If we know the parts of any subject easier and better than the whole, we consider the parts distinctly, and by putting them together, we come to the knowledge of the whole. So in *grammar* we learn first to know *letters*, we join them to make *syllables*, out of *syllables* we compose *words*, and out of *words* we make *sentences* and *discourses*. So the *physician* and *apothecary* knows the nature and powers of his *simples*, namely, his *drugs*, his *herbs*, his *minerals*, &c. and putting them together, and considering their several virtues, he finds what will be the nature and powers of the *bolus*, or any compound *medicine*: This is the *synthetick method*.

But if we are better acquainted with the whole than we are with particular parts, then we divide or resolve the whole into its parts, and thereby gain a distinct knowledge of them. So in vulgar life we learn in the gross what *plants* or *minerals* are; and then by chemistry we gain the knowledge of *salt*, *sulphur*, *spirit*, *water*, *earth*, which are the principles of them. So we are first acquainted with the whole body of an *animal*, and then by *anatomy* or *dissection*, we come to learn all the inward and outward parts of it. This is the *analytick method*.

According

According to this most general and obvious idea of *synthetick* and *analytick* method, they differ from each other as the way which leads up from a *valley* to a *mountain* differs from itself, considered as it leads down from the *mountain* to the *valley*; or as St *Matthew* and St *Luke* prove *Christ* to be the son of *Abraham*; *Luke* finds it out by *analysis*, rising from *Christ* to his *ancestors*; *Matthew* teaches it in the *synthetick* method, beginning from *Abraham*, and shewing that *Christ* is found among his posterity. Therefore it is an usual thing in the sciences, when we have by *analysis* found out a truth, we use the *synthetick* method to explain and deliver it, and prove it to be true.

In this easy view of things, these two kinds of method may be preserved conspicuously, and entirely distinct: But the subjects of knowledge being infinite, and the ways whereby we arrive at this knowledge being almost infinitely various, it is very difficult, and almost impossible, always to maintain the precise distinction between these two methods.

This will evidently appear in the following *observations*.

*Observ. I.* The *analytick* method being used chiefly to find out things unknown, it is not limited or confined merely to begin with some *whole* subject, and proceed to the knowledge of its *parts*, but it takes its rise sometimes from any single part or property, or from any thing whatsoever that belongs to a subject which happens to be first and most easily known, and thereby inquires into the more abstruse and unknown parts, properties, causes, effects, and modes of it, whether absolute or relative: As for instance,

(1.) *Analysis* finds out causes by their effects. So in the speculative part of natural philosophy, when we observe *light*, *colours*, *motion*, *hardness*, *softness*, and other properties and powers of bodies, or any of the common or uncommon *appearances* of things, either on earth or in heaven, we search out the *causes* of

them. So by the various *creatures* we find out the *Creator*, and learn his *wisdom*, *power* and *goodness*.

(2.) It finds out *effects* by their *causes*. So the practical and mechanical part of natural philosophy considers such powers of motion, as the *wind*, the *fire*, and the *water*, &c. and then contrives what uses they may be applied to, and what will be their effects in order to make *mills* and *engines* of various kinds.

(3.) It finds out the general and special nature of a thing, by considering the various attributes of the individuals, and observing what is common and what is proper, what is accidental, and what is essential. So by surveying the *colour*, the *shape*, *motion*, *rest*, *place*, *solidity*, *extension* of *bodies*, we come to find that the *nature of body* in general is *solid extension*; because all other qualities of bodies are changeable, but this belongs to *all* bodies, and it endures through all changes; and because this is proper to *body alone*, and agrees not to any thing else; and it is the foundation of all other properties.

(4) It finds out the remaining properties or parts of a thing, by having some parts or properties given. So the *area of a triangle* is found by knowing the *height* and the *base*. So by having *two sides and an angle of a triangle* given, we find the remaining *side and angles*. So when we know *cogitation* is the prime attribute of a spirit, we infer its *immateriality*, and thence its *immortality*.

(5.) *Analysis* finds the means necessary to attain a proposed end, by having the end first assigned. So in *moral*, *political*, *economical* affairs, having proposed the *government of self*, a *family*, a *society*, or a *nation*, in order to their best interest, we consider and search out what are the *proper laws*, *rules* and *means* to effect it. So in the practices of *artificers*, and *manufacturers* of various kinds, the *end* being proposed, as, *making cloth*, *houses*, *ships*, &c. we find out *ways* of composing those things for the several uses of human life. But the putting any of these means in execution to attain the end, is *synthetick method*.

Many

Many other particulars might be represented to shew the various forms of *analytick method*, whereby truth is found out, and some of them come very near to *synthetick*, so as hardly to be distinguished.

*Observ.* II. Not only the investigation of truth, but the communication of it also, is often practised in such a method, as neither agrees precisely to *synthetick* or *analytick*. Some sciences, if you consider the *whole* of them in *general*, are treated in *synthetick* order; so *physicks*, or *natural philosophy*, begins usually with an account of the *general* nature and properties of matter or bodies, and by degrees descends to consider the *particular* species of bodies, with their powers and properties; yet it is very evident, that when philosophers come to particular plants and animals, then by *chemistry* and *anatomy* they analyse or resolve those bodies into their several constituent parts. On the other hand, *logick* is begun in *analytick method*; the *whole* is divided into its integral *parts*, according to the four operations of the mind; yet here and there *synthetick* method is used in the particular branches of it, for it treats of *ideas* in general first, and then descends to the several *species* of them; it teaches us how propositions are made up of *ideas*, and *sylogisms* of *propositions*, which is the order of *composition*.

The ancient scholastick writers have taken a great deal of pains, and engaged in useless disputes about these two methods, and after all have not been able to give such an account of them as to keep them entirely distinct from each other, neither in the theory nor in the practice. Some of the *moderns* have avoided this confusion in some measure, by confining themselves to describe almost nothing else but the *synthetick* and *analytick* methods of geometricians and algebraists, whereby they have too much narrowed the nature and rules of method, as though every thing were to be treated in mathematical forms.

Upon the whole, I conclude, that neither of these



two methods should be too scrupulously and superstitiously pursued, either in the invention or in the communication of knowledge. It is enough, if the *order of nature* be but observed in making the knowledge of things following depend on the knowledge of the things which go before. Oftentimes a *mixed method* will be found most effectual for these purposes; and indeed a wise and judicious prospect of our main end and design must regulate all method whatsoever.

Here the *rules of natural method* ought to be proposed, (whether it be *analytick* or *synthetick*, or *mixed*;) but it is proper first to give some account of *arbitrary method*, lest it be thrust at too great a distance from the first mention of it.

*Arbitrary method* leaves the order of nature, and accommodates itself to many purposes; such as, to treasure up things, and retain them in memory; to harangue and persuade mankind to any practice in the religious or the civil life; or to delight, amuse, or entertain the mind.

As for the *assistance of the memory*, in most things a *natural order* has an happy influence; for reason itself deducing one thing from another, greatly assists the memory by the natural connexion and mutual dependence of things. But there are various other methods which mankind have made use of for this purpose; and indeed there are some subjects that can hardly be reduced either to *analysis* or *synthesis*.

In reading or writing *history*, some follow the order of the governors of a nation, and dispose every transaction under their particular *reigns*: So the sacred books of *Kings* and *Chronicles* are written. Some write in *annals* or *journals*, and make a new chapter of every year. Some put all those transactions together which relate to *one subject*; that is, all the affairs of *one war*, *one league*, *one confederacy*, *one council*, &c. though it lasted many years, and under many rulers.

So in writing the *lives of men*, which is called *biography*,

*graphy*, some authors follow the track of their years, and place every thing in the precise order of time when it occurred : Others throw the *temper* and *character* of the persons, their *private life*, their *publick stations*, their *personal occurrences*, their *domestick conduct*, their *speeches*, their *books* or *writings*, their *sickness* and *death*, into so many distinct chapters.

In *chronology* some writers make their *epochs* to begin all with one letter: So in the book called *Ductor Historicus*, the periods all begin with C; as *Creation*, *Cataclysm*, or deluge, *Chaldean Empire*, *Cyrus*, *Christ*, *Constantine*, &c. Some divide their accounts of time according to the four great monarchies; *Assyrian*, *Persian*, *Grecian*, and *Roman*. Others think it serves the memory best to divide all their subjects into the remarkable number of sevens; so *Prideaux* has written an *introduction to history*. And there is a book of divinity called *Fasciculus Controversiarum*, by an author of the same name, written in the same method, where in every controversy has *seven* questions belonging to it; though the order of nature seems to be too much neglected by a confinement to this *septenary number*.

Those writers and speakers whose chief business is to amuse or delight, to allure, terrify, or persuade mankind, do not confine themselves to any *natural order*, but in a *cryptical* or *hidden method*, adapt every thing to their designed ends. Sometimes they *omit* those things which might injure their design, or grow tedious to their hearers, though they seem to have a necessary relation to the point in hand: Sometimes they *add* those things which have no great reference to the subject, but are suited to allure or refresh the mind and the ear. They *dilate* sometimes, and flourish long upon little incidents, and they skip over, and but lightly touch the drier parts of their theme. They *place the first things last*, and the *last things first*, with wondrous art; and yet so manage it as to conceal their artifice, and lead the senses and passions of their hearers into a pleasing and powerful captivity.

It is chiefly *poesy* and *oratory* that require the practice of this kind of *arbitrary method*: They omit things essential which are not beautiful, they insert little needless circumstances, and beautiful digressions, they invert times and actions, in order to place every thing in the most affecting light; and for this end in their practice they neglect all *logical forms*; yet a good acquaintance with the *forms of logick and natural method* is of admirable use to those who would attain these arts in perfection; hereby they will be able to range their own thoughts in such a method and scheme, as to take a more large and comprehensive survey of their subject and design in all the parts of it; and by this means they will better judge what to choose and what to refuse; and how to dress and manage the whole scene before them, so as to attain their own ends with greater glory and success.

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## C H A P. II.

### *The Rules of METHOD, general and particular.*

THE general rules of true *method* in the pursuit or communication of knowledge, may be all comprised under the following heads. It must be (1.) *Safe*. (2.) *Plain and easy*. (3.) *Distinct*. (4.) *Full or without defect*. (5.) *Short or without superfluity*. (6.) *Proper to the subject and the design*. (7.) *Connected*.

RULE I. Among all the qualifications of a good method, there is none more necessary and important than that it should be *safe, and secure from error*; and to this end these four *particular or special directions* should be observed.

1. "Use great care and circumspection in laying the foundation of your discourse, or your scheme of thoughts upon any subject." Those propositions which are to stand as first principles, and on which

which the whole argument depends, must be viewed on all sides with the utmost accuracy, lest an error being admitted there, should diffuse itself through the whole subject. See therefore that your *general definitions* or *descriptions* are as accurate as the nature of the thing will bear: See that your *general divisions* and *distributions* be just and exact, according to the rules given in the first part of logick: See that your *axioms* be sufficiently evident, so as to demand the assent of those that examine them with due attention: See that your *first and more immediate consequences from these principles* be well drawn; and take the same care of all other *propositions* that have a powerful and spreading influence, through the several parts of your discourse.

For want of this care, sometimes a large treatise has been written by a long deduction of consequences from one or two *doubtful principles*, which principles have been effectually refuted in a few lines, and thus the whole treatise has been destroyed at once: So the largest and fairest building sinks and tumbles to the ground, if the foundation and corner-stones of it are feeble and insufficient.

2. "It is a very adviseable thing that your primary and fundamental propositions be not only evident and true, but they should be made a little familiar to the mind by dwelling upon them before you proceed farther." By this means you will gain so full an acquaintance with them, that you may draw consequences from them with much more freedom, with greater variety, brighter evidence, and with a firmer certainty, than if you have but a slight and sudden view of them.

3. "As you proceed in the connection of your arguments, see that your ground be made firm in every step." See that every link of your chain of reasoning be strong and good: For if but one link be feeble and doubtful, the whole chain of arguments feels the weakness of it, and lies exposed

to every objector, and the original question remains undetermined.

4. “ Draw up all your propositions and arguments  
 “ with so much caution, and express your ideas  
 “ with such a just limitation, as may preclude or  
 “ anticipate any objections.” Yet remember this is only to be done, as far as it is possible, without too much entangling the question, or introducing complicated ideas and obscuring the sense. But if such a cautious and limited dress of the question should render the ideas too much complicated, or the sense obscure, then it is better to keep the argument more simple, clear and easy to be understood, and afterwards mention the *objections* distinctly in their full strength and give a distinct *answer* to them.

RULE II. Let your *method* be plain and easy, so that your hearers or readers, as well as yourself, may run through it without embarrassment, and may take a clear and comprehensive view of the whole scheme. To this end the following *particular directions* will be useful.

1. “ Begin always with those things which are  
 “ best known and most obvious, whereby the mind  
 “ may have no difficulty or fatigue, and proceed  
 “ by regular and easy steps to things that are more  
 “ difficult.” And as far as possible, let not the understanding, or the proof of any of your positions, depend on the positions that follow, but always on those which go before. It is a matter of wonder that in so knowing an age as this, there should be so many persons offering violence daily to this rule, by *teaching the Latin language by a grammar written in Latin*, which method seems to require a perfect knowledge of an unknown tongue, in order to learn the first rudiments of it.

2. “ Do not affect excessive haste in learning or  
 “ teaching any science, nor hurry at once into the  
 “ midst of it, lest you be too soon involved in several new and strange ideas and propositions, which  
 “ cannot



“ cannot be well understood without a longer and  
 “ closer attention to those which go before.” Such  
 sort of speed is but a waste of time, and will con-  
 strain you to take many steps backward again, if  
 you would arrive at a regular and compleat know-  
 ledge of the subject.

3. “ Be not fond of crowding too many thoughts  
 “ and reasonings into one sentence or paragraph,  
 “ beyond the apprehension or capacity of your  
 “ readers or hearers.” There are some persons of  
 a good genius and a capacious mind, who write and  
 speak very obscurely upon this account; they affect  
 a long train of dependencies, before they come to a  
 period; they imagine that they can never fill their  
 page with too much sense; but they little think how  
 they bury their own best ideas in the crowd, and  
 render them in a manner invisible and useless to the  
 greatest part of mankind. Such men may be great  
 scholars, yet they are but poor teachers.

4. “ For the same reason avoid too many subdi-  
 “ visions. Contrive your scheme of thoughts in  
 “ such a manner as will finish your whole argument  
 “ with as few inferior branches as reason will ad-  
 “ mit; and let them be such as are obvious and  
 “ open to the understanding, that they may be with-  
 “ in one single view of the mind.” This will not  
 only assist the understanding to receive, but it will  
 aid the memory also to retain truth: Whereas a  
 discourse cut out into a vast multitude of gradual  
 subordinations, has many inconveniencies in it; it  
 gives pain to the mind and memory, in surveying  
 and retaining the scheme of discourse, and exposes  
 the unskilful hearer to mingle the superior and in-  
 ferior particulars together; it leads them into a  
 thick wood instead of open day-light, and places  
 them in a labyrinth instead of a plain path.

5. “ Give all diligence in your younger years to  
 “ obtain a clear and easy way of expressing your  
 “ conceptions, that your words, as fast as you utter  
 “ them,

“ them, may stamp your own ideas exactly on the  
 “ mind of the hearer.” This is a most happy talent  
 for the conveyance of truth, and an excellent security  
 against mistakes and needless controversies.

RULE III. Let your *method be distinct*, and without the perplexing mixture of things that ought to be kept separate, and this will be easily practised by four *directions*.

1. “ Do not bring unnecessary or \* heterogeneous  
 “ matter into your discourse on any subject; that  
 “ is, do not mingle an argument on one subject  
 “ with matters that relate entirely to another, but  
 “ just so far as is necessary to give a clearer know-  
 “ ledge of the subject in hand.” Examples in lo-  
 gick may be borrowed from any of the sciences to  
 illustrate the rules: But long interpositions of *natu-  
 ral philosophy*, of the *imagination* and *passions*, of *agen-  
 cy of spirits united to bodies*, &c. break the thread of  
 discourse, and perplex the subject.

2. “ Let every complicated theme or idea be di-  
 “ vided into its distinct single parts, as far as the  
 “ nature of the subject and your present design  
 “ requires it.” Though you must not abound in  
 needless subdivisions, yet something of this work is  
 very necessary; and it is a good judgment alone can  
 dictate how far to proceed in it, and when to stop.

Compound ideas must be reduced to a simple  
 form in order to understand them well. You may  
 easily master that subject in all the parts of it by a  
 regular succession, which would confound the un-  
 derstanding to survey them at once. So we come to  
 the knowledge of a very *perplexed diagram in geometry*,  
 or a *complicated machine in mechanicks*, by having it  
 parcelled out to us in its several parts and principles,  
 according to this and the foregoing rule of method.

3. “ Call every idea, proposition and argument  
 “ to its proper class, and keep each part of the sub-  
 “ ject

\* Things of one kind are called *homogeneous*, things  
 of different kinds are *heterogeneous*.

“ ject in its own place. Put those things all together  
 “ that belong to one part or property, one confi-  
 “ deration or view of your subject.” This will pre-  
 vent needless repetitions, and keep you from inter-  
 mixings things which are different. We must main-  
 tain this distinction of things and places if we would  
 be safe from error. It is confusion that leads us into  
 endless mistakes, which naturally arise from a va-  
 riety of ideas ill-joined, ill-sorted, or ill-disposed.  
 It is one great use of method, that a multitude of  
 thoughts and propositions may be so distinctly ranged  
 in their proper situations, that the mind may not  
 be overwhelmed with a confused attention to them  
 all at once, nor be distracted with their variety, nor  
 be tempted to unite things which ought to be sepa-  
 rated, nor to disjoin things which should be united.

4. “ In the partition of your discourse into distinct  
 “ heads, take heed that your particulars do not in-  
 “ terfere with the generals, nor with each other.”  
 Think it is not enough that you make use of distinct  
 expressions in each particular, but take care that the  
 ideas be distinct also. It is mere foolery to multiply  
 distinct particulars in treating of *things*, where the  
 difference of your particulars lies only in *names* and  
*words*.

RULE IV. The method of treating a subject should  
 be *plenary* or *full*, so that nothing may be wanting; no-  
 thing which is necessary or proper should be omitted.

When you are called to *explain* a subject, do not  
 pass by, nor skip over any thing in it which is very  
 difficult or obscure.

When you *enumerate the parts or the properties* of  
 any subject, do it in a compleat and comprehensive  
 manner.

When you are *asserting* or *proving* any truth, see  
 that every doubtful or disputable part of the argu-  
 ment be well supported and confirmed.

If you are to *illustrate* or *argue a point of difficulty*,  
 be not too scanty of words, but rather become a  
 little,

little copious and diffusive in your language: Set the truth before the reader in several lights, turn the various sides of it to view, in order to give a full idea and firm evidence of the proposition.

When you are *drawing up a narrative* of any matter of fact, see that no important circumstance be omitted.

When you propose the *solution of any difficulty*, consider all the various cases wherein it can happen, and shew how they may be solved.

In short, let your *enumerations*, your *divisions*, and *distributions* of things be so accurate, that no needful idea or part may be left out.

This *fulness of method* does not require that every thing should be said which can be said upon any subject; for this would make each single science endless: But you should say every thing which is necessary to the design in view, and which has a proper and direct tendency to this end; always proportioning the amplitude of your matter, and the fulness of your discourse to your great design, to the length of your time to the convenience, delight and profit of your hearers.

RULE V. As your method must be *full without deficiency*, so it must be *short, or without superfluity*. The *fulness* of a discourse enlarges our knowledge, and the well concerted *brevity* saves our time. In order to observe this rule, it will be enough to point out the chief of those *superfluities* or *redundancies*, which some persons are guilty of in their discourses, with a due caution against them.

1. "Avoid all needless repetitions of the same thing in different parts of your discourse." It must be confessed there are several cases wherein a review of some foregoing proposition is needful to explain or prove several of the following positions; but let your method be so contrived, as far as possible, that it may occasion the fewest rehearsals of the same thing; for it is not grateful to the hearers, without evident necessity.

2. "Have

2. "Have a care of tedious prolixity, or drawing out any part of your discourse to an unnecessary and tiresome length". It is much more honourable for an instructor, an orator, a pleader, or a preacher, that his hearers should say, *I was afraid he would have done*, than that they should be tempted to shew signs of uneasiness, and long for the conclusion.

Besides, there is another inconvenience in it; when you affect to amplify on the former branches of a discourse, you will often lay a necessity upon yourself of contracting the latter and most useful parts of it, and perhaps prevent yourself in the most important part of your design. Many a preacher has been guilty of this fault in former days, nor is the present age without some instances of this weakness.

3. "Do not multiply explications where there is no difficulty, or darkness, or danger of mistake." Be not fond of tracing every word of your theme, through all the *grammatical*, the *logical* and *metaphysical* characters and relations of it; nor shew your critical learning in spreading abroad the various senses of a word, and the various origins of those senses, the *etymology* of terms, the *synonymous* and the *paronymous* or kindred names, &c. where the chief point of discourse does not at all require it. You would laugh at a *pedant*, who professing to explain the *Athanasian creed*, should acquaint you that *Athanasius* is derived from a Greek word, which signifies *immortality*, and that the same word *Ἀθανασία*, signifies also the herb *tansy*.

There are some persons so fond of their learned distinctions, that they will shew their subtilty by *distinguishing where there is no difference*: And the same silly affectation will introduce distinctions upon every occurrence, and bring three or four *negatives* upon every subject of discourse; first to declare what it is not, and then what it is: Whereas such *negatives* ought never to be mentioned where there is no apparent danger of mistake. How ridiculous would



that writer be, who, if he were speaking of the *Nicene creed*, should declare negatively, (1.) That he did not mean *the doctrine which the inhabitants of Nice believed*; nor, (2.) *A creed written by them*; but, (3.) Positively, *a creed composed by several Christian bishops met together in the city of Nice*? The *positive* is sufficient here, and the two *negatives* are impertinent.

4. "Be not fond of proving those things which need no proof." Such as *self-evident propositions* and truths universally confessed, or such as are entirely agreed to and granted by our opponents. It is this vain affectation of *proving every thing* that has led Geometricians to form useless and intricate demonstrations to support some theorems, which are sufficiently evident to the eye by inspection; or to the mind by the first mention of them; and it is the same humour that reigns sometimes in the pulpit, and spends half the sermon in proving some general truth which is never disputed or doubted, and thereby robs the auditory of more useful entertainment.

5. As there are some things so evidently true, that they want no proof, so there are others so *evidently false* that they want no refutation. It is mere trifling, and a waste of our precious moments, to invent and raise such objections as no man would ever make in earnest, and that merely for the sake of answering and solving them: This breaks in notoriously upon the due *brevity* of method.

6. "Avoid in general all learned forms, all trappings of art, and ceremonies of the schools, where there is no need of them." It is reported concerning the late *Czar of Muscovy*, that when he first acquainted himself with mathematical learning, he practised all the rules of *circumvallation* and *contruvallation*, and the siege of a town in Livonia; and by the length of those formalities he lost the opportunity of taking the town.

7. "Do not suffer every occasional and incidental thought to carry you away into a long parenthesis," and

“ and thus to stretch out your discourse, and divert  
 “ you from the point in hand.” In the pursuit of  
 your subject, if any useful thought occur which  
 belongs to some other theme, note it down for the  
 sake of your memory on some other paper, and lay  
 it by in reserve for its proper place and season:  
 But let it not incorporate itself with your present  
 theme, nor draw off your mind from your main bu-  
 siness, though it should be ever so inviting. A man,  
 who walks directly but slowly towards his journey’s  
 end, will arrive thither much sooner than his neigh-  
 bour, who runs into every crooked turning which  
 he meets, and wanders aside to gaze at every thing  
 that strikes his eyes by the way, or to gather every  
 gaudy flower that grows by the side of the road.

To sum up all: “ There is an happy medium to  
 “ be observed in our method, so that the brevity  
 “ may not render the sense obscure, nor the argu-  
 “ ment feeble, nor our knowledge merely superfi-  
 “ cial: And on the other hand, that the fulness  
 “ and copiousness of our method may not waste the  
 “ time, tire the learner, or fill the mind with trifles  
 “ and impertinencies.”

The *copious* and the *contracted* way of writing have  
 each their peculiar advantages. There is a proper  
 use to be made of *large paraphrases*, and *full, parti-  
 cular, and diffusive explications and arguments*; these  
 are fittest for those who design to be acquainted  
 thoroughly with every part of the subject. There is  
 also an use of *shorter hints, abstracts, and compendiums*,  
 to instruct those who seek only a slight and general  
 knowledge, as well as to refresh the memory of  
 those who have learned the science already, and  
 gone through a large scheme. But it is a gross a-  
 buse of these various methods of instruction, when  
 a person has read a *mere compendium* or *epitome* of any  
 science, and he vainly imagines that he understands  
 the whole science. So one boy may become a *philo-  
 sopher* by reading over the mere dry definitions and

divisions of *Scheibler's Compendium of Peripateticism*: So another may boast that he understands *anatomy* because he has seen a *skeleton*; and a third professes himself a learned *divine*, when he can repeat the *apostles creed*.

RULE VI. "Take care that your *method* be proper to the *subject* in hand, proper to your present design, as well as proper to the *age* and *place* where-  
" in you dwell."

1. Let your *method* be proper to the *subject*. All sciences must not be learned or taught in one method. *Morality* and *theology*, *metaphysics* and *logick*, will not be easily and happily reduced to strict *mathematical* method: Those who have tried, have found much inconvenience therein.

Some things have more need to be *explained* than to be *proved*; as *axioms*, or *self-evident propositions*; and indeed all the *first great principles*, the chief and most important doctrines both of *natural* and *revealed religion*; for when the sense of them is clearly explained, they appear so evident in the light of *nature* or *scripture*, that they want no other proof. There are other things that stand in need of *proof*, as well as *explication*, as many *mathematical theorems*, and several deep *controversies* in *morality* and *divinity*: There are yet other sorts of subjects which want rather to be warmly impressed upon the mind by *fervent exhortations*, and stand in more need of this than they do either of proof or explication; such are the most general, plain and obvious duties of *piety towards God*, and *love towards men*, with the *government of all our inclinations and passions*. Now these several subjects ought to be treated in a different manner and method.

Again, There are some subjects in the same treatise which are more useful and necessary than others, and some parts of a subject which are *eminently and chiefly designed* by a writer or speaker: *True method* will teach us to dwell longer upon these themes, and to lay out more thought and labour upon them;

them; whereas the same *art of method* will teach us to cut short those things which are used only to *introduce* our main subject, and to stand as scaffolding merely to aid the structure of our discourse. It will teach us also to content ourselves with brief *hints* of those matters which are merely *occasional* and *incidental*.

2. Your *method* must be adjusted by your *design*; for if you treat of the same subject with two different views and designs, you will find it necessary to use different methods. Suppose the *doctrine of the sacred Trinity* were your theme, and you were to read a lecture to young students on that subject, or if you designed a treatise for the conviction of learned men, you would pursue a very different method from that which would be proper to regulate a practical discourse, or a sermon to instruct common Christians merely in the pious improvement of this doctrine, and awaken them to the duties which are derived thence.

In short, we must not first lay down certain and precise rules of method, and resolve to confine the matter we discourse of to that particular form and order of topics; but we must well consider, and study the subject of our discourse thoroughly, and take a just survey of our present *design*, and these will give sufficient hints of the *particular form and order* in which we should handle it, provided that we are moderately skilled in the *general laws of method and order*.

Yet let it be noted here, that neither the *subject*, nor *matter* of a discourse, nor the particular design of it, can so precisely determine the method, as to leave no room for liberty and variety. The very same theme may be handled, and that also with the same design, in several different methods, among which it is hard to say which is the best. In writing a *system of divinity*, some begin with the scriptures, and thence deduce all other doctrines and duties. Some begin with the *being of God* and his *attributes*, so far as he is known by the light of *nature*, and then

then proceed to the doctrines of *revelation*. Some distinguish the whole subject into the *credenda* and *agenda*, that is, *Things to be believed*, and *things to be done*. Some think it best to explain the whole Christian religion by an *historical detail of all the discoveries which God has made of himself to this lower world*, beginning at the *creation* in the first chapter of *Genesis*, and so proceeding onward according to the narrative of the Old and New Testament. And there are others that endeavour to include the whole of religion under these four heads, namely, *The apostles creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, and the two sacraments*; though I cannot but think this is the least accurate of any. The same variety may be allowed in treating other subjects; this very *treatise of logick* is an instance of it, whose method differs very considerably from any others which I have seen, as they differ also greatly from one another, though several of them are confessed to be well written.

3. Though a just view of our *subject* and our *design* may dictate proper rules of natural method, yet there must be some little difference at least paid to the *custom of the age* wherein we live, and to the *humour and genius* of our readers or hearers; which if we utterly reject and disdain, our performance will fail of the desired success, even though we may have followed the just rules of method. I will mention but this one instance: In the former century it was frequent with learned men to divide their theme or subject into a great multitude of *co-ordinate members or parts*, they abounded also in the *forms of logick and distinction*, and indulged numerous ranks of *subordination*. Now though we ought not to abandon the *rules of just method and division*, in order to comport with the modish writers in our age who have renounced them, yet it is prudent to pay so much respect to the custom of the age, as to use these *forms of division* with due moderation, and not affect



to multiply them in such a manner, as to give an early and needless disgust to the generality of our present readers. The same may be said concerning various other methods of conduct in the affairs of learning, as well as the affairs of life, wherein we must indulge a little to custom: And yet we must by no means suffer ourselves so far to be imposed upon and governed by it, as to neglect those rules of method which are necessary for the *safe, easy, and compleat* inquiry into truth, or the *ready and effectual communication* of it to others.

RULE VII. The last requisite of method is, that *the parts of a discourse should be well connected*; and these three short directions will suffice for this purpose.

1. "Keep your main end and design ever in view, and let all the parts of your discourse have a tendency towards it, and as far as possible make that tendency visible all the way:" Otherwise the readers or hearers will have reason to wonder for what end that or this particular was introduced.

2. "Let the mutual relation and dependence of the several branches of your discourse be so just and evident, that every part may naturally lead onward to the next, without any huge chasms or breaks which interrupt and deform the scheme." The connexion of truths should arise and appear in their successive rank and order, as the several parts of a fine prospect ascend just behind each other, in their natural and regular elevations and distances, and invite the eye to climb onward with constant pleasure till it reach the sky. Whatsoever horrid beauty a precipice or a cataract may add to the prospect of a country, yet such sort of hideous and abrupt appearances in a scene of reasoning are real blemishes and not beauties. When the reader is passing over such a treatise, he often finds a wide vacancy, and makes an uneasy stop, and knows not how to transport his thoughts over to the next particular,

ticular, for want of some clue or connecting idea to lay hold of.

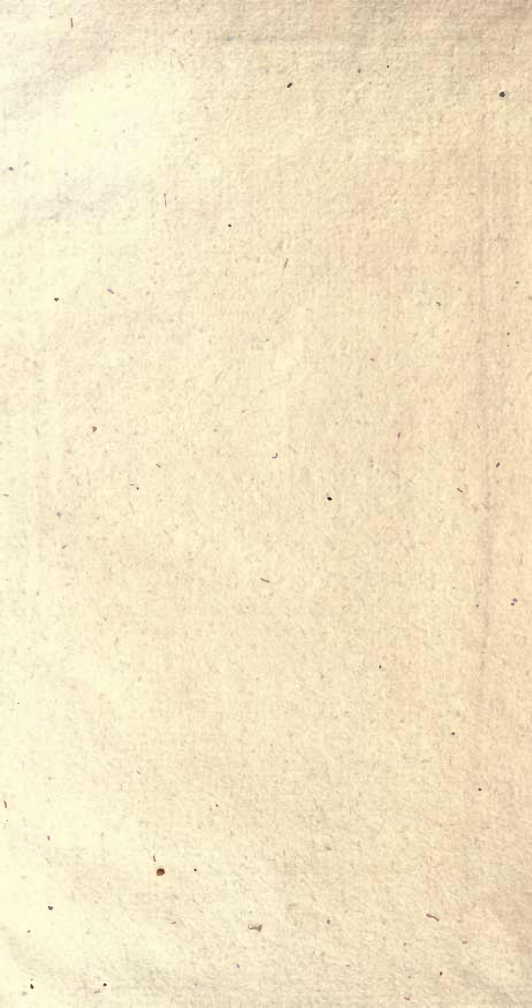
3. " Acquaint yourself with all the proper and decent forms of transition from one part of a discourse to another, and practise them as occasion offers." Where the ideas, propositions and arguments, are happily disposed, and well connected, the truth indeed is secure; but it renders the discourse much more agreeable, when proper and graceful expression joins the parts of it together in so entertaining a manner, that the reader knows not how to leave off till he hath arrived at the end.

These are the general and most important *rules of true METHOD*; and though they belong chiefly to the *communication* of knowledge, yet an early and thorough acquaintance with them will be of considerable use toward the *pursuit* and *attainment* of it.

Those persons who have never any occasion to communicate knowledge by writing or by publick discourses, may also with great advantage peruse these *rules of method*, that they may learn to judge with justice and accuracy concerning the performances of others. And besides, a good acquaintance with *method*, will greatly assist every one in ranging, disposing and managing all human affairs.

The *particular means* or *method* for a farther improvement of the understanding are very various, such as *meditation*, *reading*, *conversing*, *disputing by speech* or *by writing*, *question and answer*, &c. And in each of these practices some special forms may be observed, and special rules may be given to facilitate and secure our inquiries after truth: But this would require a little volume by itself, and a treatise of *logick* has always been esteemed sufficiently compleat without it.

T H E E N D.



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